

Robert Mellors  
Primary  
and  
Nursery  
School



# *Attendance Policy*

Latest review: March 2017

## **Robert Mellors Primary and Nursery School**

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **Statutory Duty of Schools**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the Attendance Register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

#### **The Importance of Regular School Attendance**

The school is committed to promoting the importance of good attendance within the school community as it is a key factor in enabling pupils to be confident and successful learners.

Parents and carers have a vital role to play in ensuring the good attendance of their child and therefore we seek every opportunity to establish good home-school relationships.

The school is sensitive to how pupils may personally feel about attendance issues as they may not be responsible and have limited means to influence it.

#### **Aims of this Policy**

- To increase the levels of attendance throughout the school
- To continue to improve punctuality
- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance
- To inform parents of attendance and punctuality issues
- To identify the causes of non-attendance
- To take further action when required
- Ensure fair and consistent implementation
- Provide support, advice and guidance
- To implement rewards for good attendance
- To promote positive and consistent communication between home and school

#### **The School Day**

- The first alarm sounds at 8:50am, children make their way into the classrooms to get ready for the start of the day
- The second alarm sounds at 8:55am to signal the start of the day
- The morning session ends at 12:00noon
- The afternoon session begins at 1:00pm
- The school day ends at 3:15pm

#### **Marking the Register**

- Teachers mark the Attendance Register at the start of each morning and afternoon session
- The school will use the LA attendance codes
- All present marks will be marked in red pen and absences in black pen

- A present mark is denoted by a diagonal red line
- An absent mark is denoted by an empty space until the reason is known
- Any unsatisfactory absence explanation will be followed up by the Attendance Officer

### **Punctuality**

A late mark will be placed in the School Register if a child arrives in school up to 15 minutes after registration. After this time any lateness is classed as unauthorised absence.

After 9am parent/carers should sign the Late Book at the School Office giving time of arrival and reasons for their child's lateness. Children who consistently arrive late are monitored by the Head Teacher and the School Attendance Officer, and parents are contacted regarding this.

### **Absence**

Parents/carers should notify the school by phone, letter or verbally regarding any absences and explanations for them. If notification of absence is not received, the school operates a first day of absence call system. The School Attendance Officer will contact the home address to ascertain the whereabouts of the child.

Holidays should **not** be taken during term time, however, in exceptional circumstances up to 10 days can be authorised by the Head Teacher. A leave of absence form should be used to request any absence from school which **must** be authorised by the Head Teacher before any absence is booked or taken.

#### **An authorised absence is:**

- Illness
- Illness with a risk of infection to others
- A death in the immediate family
- Religious holidays (specified in advance)
- Routine medical or dental appointments that cannot be made outside school hours
- Leave of absence authorised by the Head Teacher

#### **Unauthorised absence includes:**

- Minding the house
- Caring for siblings
- Sibling is ill
- Shopping
- Holidays/absences not receiving authorisation by the Head Teacher
- Regular illness where no medical evidence is received
- Decisions made to not authorise any absences due to serious attendance issues

#### **Exceptional circumstances** considered for leave of absence requests include:

- Place of employment does not give flexibility in when holidays can be taken (a letter from your employer on headed stationery will be required)
- Close family member wedding or funeral (invitation needs to be seen)
- Family emergencies
- Doctors recommendation
- One off family exceptional circumstances

## **Attendance Concerns**

### **Should attendance cause concern the school will:**

- Notify parent/carers of pupil concerned, seek reasons and offer support
- Monitor attendance weekly or even daily if high risk
- Put pupils on attendance report
- Seek agency support if there is no improvement
- Explain serious consequences of poor attendance, for example, possible fines
- Refer to the school Attendance Officer for support/follow up

## **Monitoring Attendance**

### **The School Attendance Officer is responsible for monitoring attendance by:**

- Weekly attendance and lateness of pupils being monitored
- Weekly class attendance
- Ensuring attendance is logged on the school system and up to date
- Updating EAZ MAG termly with pupil attendance
- Updating the Head Teacher as soon as any concerns arise regarding punctuality or absence
- Updating the Head Teacher half termly regarding pupils who are being monitored
- Providing attendance reports to share with Governors
- Liaising with targeted support or other agencies regarding pupils with attendance issues

## **Promoting Good Attendance**

The school places a high priority on promoting positive attitudes towards attendance. This is done through; Assertive Mentoring targets, assemblies, PSHE work, work with families and rewards. The school also has a School Attendance Mascot called 'Snappy' who makes regular visits in school to reward good attendance.

### **Good attendance is rewarded through:**

- Class weekly attendance cup
- Weekly 100% class attendance reward
- Termly class attendance cup and reward
- Yearly 100% attendance certificates and rewards
- Letters to families if attendance improves
- 'Early bird' attendance prizes and certificates
- Other incentives deemed appropriate

## **Persistent Absenteesim**

The school needs to keep an 'open mind' about the possible reasons for persistent absence and ensure it explores all options when persistent absence is identified so it can proactively deal with it. This is particularly important as historically the school has noted that absence is higher amongst our more vulnerable families and younger pupils so we wish to ensure they get the support they need. Also linked to the governments emphasis on the 'Prevent Duty' absence has been identified as a relating factor.

- Families of particular concern will be monitored weekly by the Attendance Officer
- Pupils on FSM/PP will be supported by additional internal targeted support
- Families will be notified of the school's concern
- Support will be offered

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- If levels continue to fall a referral to targeted support may be made with the family's permission
- If levels fall below 85% a referral can be made without needing to seek permission
- If families do not engage targeted support may be brought in to visit the family at home
- If no improvements are evident over a period of time and there is no evident reason why attendance should not improve the school may consider issuing penalty fines

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

A copy of this policy is held on file in the School Office, in the Head Teacher's policy file and on the school website.

**If you have any questions or queries, please contact the School Office or the Head Teacher.**