



## **MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Manor Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Good attendance is an important part of helping your child reach his/her full potential. All parents have a responsibility in law for ensuring that, once they are registered at school, their children attend regularly.

### **Aims:**

- To safeguard children
- To maximise attendance of all children
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The promotion of high attendance is the responsibility of all stakeholders in school.

### **Parent Role**

Parents must contact the school on the first day of any absence by 9:30am to explain the reason for the absence. Parents should understand that in law, it is the school who decides whether the absence is going to be authorised or not. Schools will base this judgment on the reason provided for the absence and/or the level of absence. Parents are encouraged to ensure their child attends school regularly and any emerging issues should be advised to the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents must write a note to the school offering a reason for any known absence. Parents must NOT expect any leave of absence to be granted for the purpose of a holiday. Parents must NOT expect any leave of absence to be granted automatically. This includes any requests for leave of absence in respect of a pilgrimage. Whilst all requests will be considered individually, parents must respect that the Head teacher's decision is final and is made in line with Legislative constraints. National Government and Local Authority expectations. Parents must make sure their child/ren arrive at school on time.

### **Head Teacher**

The Head teacher must ensure the absence management process is in line with legislation and regulation. She must also ensure registers are maintained accurately in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006. The Head Teacher will continue to raise education standards for children by encouraging regular school attendance.

## **Class Teacher**

Class teacher's will ensure their registers are maintained in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) England regulations 2006. Class teacher's will ensure any information appertaining to a child's punctuality or attendance is communicated in the register at the earliest opportunity. This will avoid unnecessary telephone contact with families or cause them undue concern.

## **Office Management**

The office will ensure registers are updated with the appropriate attendance and absence codes. Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence after 9:30am. They will also provide absence reports from the Education Management System (SIMS) at the request of the Head teacher. The office will liaise with class teacher's and the Head Teacher to report any emerging patterns of absence or when a child is absent without a good reason.

## **Attendance Officer**

The named attendance officer for the school works within a commissioned time framework and will support the school to manage their attendance. The officer will normally visit once each week for a referral meeting with the Attendance Lead. The attendance officer will carry out unannounced home visits to families who have recent absence. The attendance officer and the school will identify children who are Persistently Absent (PA) or at risks of becoming PA each term and will actively target those children for early intervention.

## **Our school attendance management process**

### **Daily**

- All class registers will be marked accurately on the OMR's
- Reasons for absence will be screened to establish whether absence is authorised or not
- All daily absence will be scrutinised for reason and notification
- Parents will be contacted when the reason for absence is not satisfactory or unknown
- Pupils arriving after 9:30am will be recorded as late in the register

### **Weekly**

- All absences will be scrutinised for identification of repeat periods of absence or emerging patterns of absence
- Referrals to Education Welfare Service identified
- Requests for leave of absence referred to Head teacher and parents informed of outcome by letter

### **Half Term**

- Letters sent to children on trajectory to becoming Persistent Absentees
- Identification of children who need multi-agency involvement to support concerns or complexities which include absence or punctuality concerns
- Implementation of multi-agency involvement to support concerns or complexities of individual cases where there are absence or punctuality concerns

## **Lateness**

Pupils arriving after the register has been marked at 8:50am will be considered as late and must report to the school office and sign in on the computer Inventory system. Registers close at 9:30am, any pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as an unauthorised absence using the 'U' code. Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality.

## **Unauthorised Absence**

All absence will have an appropriate code in accordance with DfE Guidance Absence and Attendance Codes. If there has been no reason provided for the absence or an unsatisfactory reason has been provided, then the school can only record absence as UNAUTHORISED. It is the decision of the school and NOT the parent which determines whether absence is authorised or not.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence could be:

- Family Birthday
- Holidays not agreed
- Shopping, hair cuts, buying shoes or uniform
- Emerging patterns of any absence until satisfactory reason has been sought
- Illness & bereavement (e.g. this would usually be immediate family)

## **Authorised Absence**

Absence can be recorded as authorised when a school has been satisfied there is a satisfactory reason for the absence. It is only recorded as authorised if it is something affecting the child's ability to attend school.

## **Illness**

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence.
- Where Office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence after 9:30am.
- A child below 90% attendance would be expected to provide medical evidence, prescription copy or doctor's appointment
- The Attendance Officer will undertake home visits to monitor and promote attendance and punctuality.

## **Medical/dental appointments**

Please make every effort to book any appointments out of school hours. A child will only be authorised to be absent for medical appointments where an appointment card/evidence is provided and your child will be expected to attend school before/after any appointment

## **Term time absence**

Current guidance from both the Government and our Local Authority no longer allows us to consider requests for leave of absence during term-time.

Parents need to apply for leave of absence to the Head Teacher in advance, outlining the following:

- First date and last date of leave of absence
- Name, address and date of birth of the child
- Reasons for such a request
- Request to see both outward & incoming flight details (if appropriate)

In Law, it is the Head Teacher's decision whether to authorise absence or not and this has been upheld by the High Court. Only in very exceptional circumstances will the Head Teacher agree to absence which is in relation to holiday absence. Exceptional circumstances refers to extenuating and emergency situations related to core family members. Core family members are Mother, Father, siblings of the child in school.

There is no automatic right for any term time absence. The Child's education will be paramount and absence will only be granted in very exceptional circumstances. The school and governing body are committed to raising standards and therefore the educational needs of the child will be critical in the decision-making process. Parents should not expect term time absence to be granted.

The law states that schools can delete a pupils name from the register when the pupils have been continually absent for not less than 20 days, such absence was not authorised, and the proprietor (school) does not have grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend due to sickness or any unavoidable cause, and the proprietor and the LA have failed after reasonable enquiry to ascertain where the pupil is.

The school follows the principles as set out in Walsall Children's Services Guidance for 'Tackling Holiday Absence'

If the absence is not authorised, but the leave is taken anyway, the case will be processed by the Local Authority who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

## **Penalty Notices and Walsall Code of Practice**

Subsection (1) of section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 adds two new sections (444A and 444B), after section 444 of the Education Act 1996. These new sections introduce Penalty Notices as an alternative to prosecution under section 444 and enable a parent to discharge potential liability for conviction and for that offence by paying a penalty.

Section 3 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gives powers to Local Authorities, Head teachers or other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent is capable but unwilling to secure school attendance. These powers came into force on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2004.

Under existing legislation, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, a parent commits an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absence is not authorised by the school.

The Penalty is £60.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period, then the Local Authority must prosecute or withdraw the notice. Prosecution will be in respect of statutory action under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

### **Reporting to Parents and Carers**

At the end of the academic year, parents receive their child's report detailing their attendance. In order to give parents/carers a benchmark to their child's attendance in relation of other children in the school and nationally the following grades will be used:

Attendance	100%	98-99.9%	97.25 – 97.9%	97.24% - 94%	Below 94%
	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Need to improve	Concern

### **Dropping off and collecting children:**

Staff will meet the children on the playground. The bell is rung at 8.45am so please leave your child when the bell rings. Please support the '**respect line**' which allows the staff to have a full visual of all of the children. If the weather is inclement, the duty staff will signal that the children can enter school and they will be met by their class teacher. All late arrivals must report to the school office. Letters will be sent to any parents who constantly bring their children to school late.

### **Dismissing at the end of the school day:**

**Nursery, Reception and Years one to three** need to be collected by a known adult from their class base. If the adult is not named on your collection list, you need to inform the class teacher/school office.

This is to comply with the Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements and ensure a safe handover of any child up to the age of 8 years (Year 3).

**If you do not arrive on time your child will be taken to the reception area by the school office for collection.** School staff have meetings and other duties at the end of the school day so it is important that children are collected on time.

Children in Years four to six are still to be collected from school and are told that they must come back into school if their parent/carer is not there. (Parents should also reinforce this). Year six children may walk home from school if the school has received written permission for them to leave unaccompanied.

**PLEASE NOTE:** We are following the guidance from the DfE in relation to attendance and we are running a staggered drop off and collection system for the school via the main school gate.

### **Annually reviewed by the Governing Body**