

Lime Academy Parnwell Attendance Policy

Adopted by: Parnwell Academy Council

Date: November 2017

Review date: September 2018



Our unique approach

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school, where we celebrate diversity and difference and acknowledge the richness that this brings to our school community.

We aim to provide opportunities for all children to access a broad, balanced and creative curriculum, regardless of age, attainment, ethnicity, language or background that is personalised to meet children's individual needs.

Introduction

We are a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open.

Regular school attendance is crucial if a child is to achieve their full potential and research shows that raising pupil's attendance has contributed to raising achievements.

Overview

The policy is set out to reflect statutory requirements and the most recent guidance from the DFE. We expect all our children to attend school, on time, every day, unless the reason for absence is exceptional. As a school we aim for all children to have 100% attendance.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any child's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise



The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

What is the role of the Parent/Carer?

As a parent/carers it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child receives an education.

Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.

What is the role of the Child?

Children are expected to attend school regularly, punctually and appropriately prepared for lessons. The target attendance for all children is 100%. We aim to make children aware of these responsibilities and ensure that they want to come to school by offering a safe and stimulating experience when they are here.

What is the role of the Headteacher?

The Headteacher will ensure that the school meets all legal requirements, sets targets for attendance and publishes attendance figures. The Headteacher has a duty under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 to make a return to Peterborough City Council and the Academy Council where there is a poor pattern of attendance or a child has had an unauthorised absence for a continuous period. Details of attendance and any connected initiatives are reported to the local Academy Council in each of the Head teacher's reports.

The role of the Academy Council

The Academy Council has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance in school and should be familiar with the current legislation and the school's registration system. They can request reports on attendance and procedures as necessary. They must ensure that the school is working above the government's benchmark of 96% attendance for primary schools. One Academy Council member has particular responsibility for attendance and liaison with the Headteacher.

The role of the Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer meets with the Headteacher/Head of School and is the point of contact between the Local Authority and the school.



She/he advises the school and monitors performance in relation to attendance and punctuality. She/he also takes referrals from the school for more focused interventions with particular families. Intervening with children who are causing concern because of punctuality or attendance

These interventions include home visits, interviews at school, support for families with particular problems which affect attendance and punctuality. Where necessary, appropriate, legal action against families who are not fulfilling their responsibilities under the Education Act will be taken. These include penalty notices, fines (£60 per parent per child, rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days – Anti-social Behaviour Act 2004) or prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court.

The role of the Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team and the Academy Council will monitor attendance on a weekly and half termly basis. They will make sure that parents and carers are aware of their responsibilities around attendance.

The Role of the School Office

The school office is the first point of contact for parents/carers in connection with attendance. They have a crucial role in communicating reasons for children's absence given by parents/carers. They will note any reasons for absence given in a phone message, text, email or in person to them and record them and pass it to the Attendance Officer. If a child arrives after the register has been called, the appointed staff members will record the child's name and their time of arrival electronically and enter the number of minutes late on the 'SIMS' Register. These records need to be kept accurately as they may be required as evidence, should a case of persistent lateness be taken to court by the Local Authority.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for ensuring all daily registers are complete and for monitoring individual attendance and punctuality on a daily basis, referring any concerns or queries to the Senior Leadership Team.

Children arriving late for school will be accounted for at the school office and will need to sign in on our 'InVentry' Sign-in System (this will log the exact time a child arrived at school). Class registers officially close at 9:10 am. Children who arrive after this time will be recorded with an unauthorised absence, 8 or more unauthorised absences in any term will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). The school office is responsible for ensuring all daily registers are complete and for monitoring individual attendance and punctuality on a daily basis, referring any concerns or queries to the Senior Leadership Team.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in newsletters
- Report on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is

- Inform you how this this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements via the school newsletter
- Reward good or improving attendance through borough competitions and certificates
- Celebrate good attendance in assemblies
- Promote with parents/carers, children and staff, raising attendance levels across the school

Understanding types of absence

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason like illness. Medical/dental/optician appointments should be made outside of school time when possible. The appointment letter should be shown to the school office in advance.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. This type of absence can lead to the Peterborough City Council using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time

We recognise that there are cases where children may be reluctant to attend school. In these circumstances please contact the school as soon as possible for advice. . If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents/carers and the child.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A child becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the academic year (this includes authorised and unauthorised absences) for whatever reason. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the persistent absent level or is at risk of moving towards the level, is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately. Persistently absent children are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic monitoring where absence affects attainment

Circumstances where Penalty Notice may be requested from the LA by the School:

A Penalty Notice can be issued if one of the following criteria can be met

- A single unauthorised absence event of at least 2 consecutive school days (4consecutive sessions);
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed contribute to a level of unauthorised absence of 10% or above;
- Lack of adherence to the dates agreed for any authorised leave of absence without reasonable justification;
- Pupils identified in a public place whilst excluded from school (during the first five days of the exclusion period) without reasonable justification.
- 8 sessions over an 8 week period will warrant a penalty notice

For further information regarding Penalty Notices please refer to the **Peterborough City Council Code of Conduct** which is available on the Peterborough City Council Website.

Registration

Class registers are legal documents and must be treated accordingly. They must not leave the school premises. The class teacher will ensure that the registration period is orderly and calm and that the registers are called promptly and accurately every morning and every afternoon. Registration should be taken at the same time to ensure consistency in identifying latecomers.

Daily Registers

The school day starts at 8.50am and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by 8.55am. Children who arrive after 8:50am, are coded “L” (late) in the register. Those children who arrive after 9:10am are coded “U” which is an unauthorised absence.

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. When a pupil arrives late to school, there are many consequences:

- Pupils often feel awkward and embarrassed going into the classroom when everyone else is already settled;
- When one person arrives late – the class is disrupted and the teacher must take time away from the other pupils to explain what has been missed;
- Arriving 5 minutes late each day adds up to missing 3 entire days of school by the end of the academic year;
- Poor punctuality can also encourage absence;
- The school must ensure every child is recorded in case of emergency evacuation;
- Children arriving late for school must go directly to the school office to be recorded on the inventory system and will be recorded as late on the register. Your child will be given a late pass that they will hand to the class teacher

The school monitors punctuality on a weekly basis. Persistent lateness over a half term will result in the following actions;

- 6-10 Late arrivals a letter will be sent to parents/carers and recorded on the child's record
- 10+ Later arrivals – parents will be invited in to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team



Children receiving 8 unauthorised absences within any 8 week period may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Peterborough City Council.

Children picked up late after school

Such incidents can cause distress to children who are keen to see their parents/carers at the end of the school day and should be avoided at all cost.

Parents/carers must telephone the school office if they are running late and advise on the time of their arrival in school.

The school will make all reasonable effort to contact parents/carers who fail to collect their child after school.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

Contact the school on the first day of absence and keep us informed thereafter via the absence line or directly at the school office. If your child is due to have a planned medical appointment or procedure/operation, you must notify the school in advance and provide documentary evidence in the form of an official letter or appointment card, where available make appointments outside of school hours.

If a child is absent 3 days with no contact then the school will arrange a home visit.

For any absent children the school will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team if absences persist
- Ask you to provide medical evidence, for example a doctor's letter or prescription medication, if attendance falls below 96%
- If attendance becomes below 90% we will consider legal action.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

Attendance Behaviour
Management Health and
Safety Access to the
Curriculum Anti-bullying



Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

School Term Time

Our term times are set in accordance with our Academy Trust and with consultation with the Local Authority recommendations.

The confirmation of our school term dates are available from our websites or the main school office. Please do not refer to any other sources as these are not confirmed by ourselves.

<http://limeacademyparnwell.london/>

Exceptional Leave in Term Time

We understand and encourage participation in external school activities and pursuits. This can sometimes lead to pupils requiring special leave from school to attend additional training, competitions and other events.

The school may grant special leave throughout the academic year to support the development and aspirations of the children. Any child requesting special leave must supply a letter in writing to the Headteacher, accompanied by an official invite on headed paper from the organisers / providers.

Any days additional to this or absence due to sickness prior to or after the requested date will be marked as an unauthorised absence, unless medical evidence is provided

No authorisation for leave of absence can be given retrospectively, which means permission must always be sought beforehand. Should any child fail to return to school, we are obliged to make contact with the Child Missing In Education Officer at Peterborough City Council. Please note if a child does not return to school within 20 school days they are at risk of losing their place on the school roll

In the event that leave for exceptional absence is granted, any further days of absence will be regarded as unauthorised. The school must be informed in all instances and where the cause is sickness and evidence must be produced.

The Academy Council will not authorise any leave at times when children are scheduled to take public examinations. Parents/carers will be notified as soon as these dates are known. If children are on leave without authorisation, Peterborough City Council has the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices of £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days (Anti-social Behaviour Act 2004).

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

School registers are monitored daily to identify class attendance and punctuality percentages. Individual attendance and punctuality is also monitored on a daily basis.

During agreed visits with the Attendance Service from Peterborough City Council, all children's punctuality and attendance are discussed. After



determining whether there are valid reasons for lateness or absences, parents/carers may be written to or invited to meet with the Attendance Officer to discuss how to resolve any identified problems. If there is a pattern of poor attendance the school may refer the child to the Local Authority Attendance Service with regard further intervention.

Telephone Numbers/email

There are times when we need to contact parent/carers. You must provide the school with up to date contact numbers and a current email address. If you don't and we need to contact you urgently or in an emergency we may not be able to. There will be regular checks made with regard to telephone numbers and contact details throughout the academic year.

Change of Address

If a family are moving to a new address, parents/carers must provide the school with their new address and contact numbers.. If the family are moving overseas, parents/carers must complete the **Leaving City Form** which is available from the school office and provide travel documents and a forwarding address. Failure to do this will result in a referral to the 'Children Missing Education' officer at the Peterborough City Council.

Transferring to another School

Parents/carers must notify the school immediately if they are removing their child to start at another school.

The parents/carers must provide the name of the new school. If a family are moving to a new address, which requires the child to attend a new school but the child is not yet registered then parents/carers must provide the school with their new address. The parents/carers should complete the **Leaving City Form** which is available from the school office.

Occasionally children may move away from the school without notifying us. We make every reasonable effort to locate the child and their family. A 20 day letter will be issued and the case referred to the CME Officer.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents /carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and children; this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

