



Pupil Attendance Policy

2019-20

1. Introduction

Princes Primary School recognise that there is a clear link between attendance and pupil achievement. This policy is to help encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and to support families in achieving this.

Attendance is important as it is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues, by seeing the children on a regular basis and providing an educationally safe and secure environment.

2. Aims

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Princes Primary School by:

- Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.
- Working with the local authority to pursue the maintenance of regular pupil attendance by all possible means.
- Providing support and advice for parents, pupils and staff in maximising attendance.

3. Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child who is not attending school is considered as a safeguarding matter. It is important for parents to provide school with information if their child will be absent from school.

3.1 Expectations of Parent/Carer

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal obligation (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

- Ensure your child arrives to school on time (ready to be collected by transport, or dropped off by 9.15am for Princes Main site, or 9am for Smithdown and Princes Early Years).
- Telephone school if your child will be late or absent.
- On the first day of absence, if your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please give an indication as to when your child will be returning to school.
- Contact the safeguarding team if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.

- **In case of emergency** we need to have up to date contact numbers at all times. Please ensure you inform us of any changes as soon as possible. We require a minimum of 2 emergency contacts, and 1 emergency contact who does not live at your home address.
- **Requests for exceptional circumstances:** leave of absences for exceptional circumstances must be in writing to the Head Teacher. General holidays will not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

3.2 Expectations of the school

- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 10am.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised, a member of the safeguarding team will decide whether a home visit is required. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing, and we are not aware of a good reason, the parent/carer will be invited to meet the Family Liaison Officer or the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- If absences persist, the Head Teacher will discuss actions with the EWO.

4. Understanding types of absence

Prince Primary School has to report every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence.

4.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation as satisfactory justification for the child not attending school on a particular day. If no explanation is received, absences can not be authorised. It is the Head Teacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absences from school.

4.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence, or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request.

This type of absence may result in the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2019, Princes Primary School will issue warning letters to parents who have child attendance falling below 90%.

4.3 Persistent Absence

- Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence, whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene by this point.
- Whilst we will take in to consideration that some pupils can be absent from school for medical requirements, we have a duty of care to follow up all needs so the school can provide support to families where needed.
- Parents/Carers are asked to contact the school office in the first instance, where they will be sign posted to a relevant member of staff.

5. Why is regular attendance important?

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupil's learning. It is vital for our children to be in a regular routine and accessing an educational setting. Pupils who have time off often find them difficult to settle back in to a routine.

90% attendance is equivalent to a child missing half a day every week.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason is an offence in law (The Education Act, 1996) and may result in legal action.

6. How will Princes Primary support families?

The Family Liaison Officer will work with families who either ask for support, or who have children who fall under the 90% attendance mark.

If the attendance falls under 90%:

- Parents will be informed as to what their child's attendance is on a regular basis.
- Parents will be required to provide proof of medical appointments
- Parents will be invited to attend regular attendance meetings if deemed necessary to help support families and improve a child's attendance.

7. Leave of absence in Term time (i.e. Holidays)

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstance warrants granting leave.

Parent/carers may receive a penalty notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without giving prior notice to the school . Consent can not be given retrospectively.

8. People responsible for Attendance Matters at Princes

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support, therefore, is vital in making every pupil's journey a success.

Appendix Contents

Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix A: Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

When	Who?	Actions Expected
Daily	Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to be ready to be collected by transport, or to arrive at school by 9.15am for Princes main site, or 9am for Early Years or Smithdown. • Ensure school are aware by 10am if child will not be present at school and why, or if a child will be late.
	Class Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registers to be completed on SIMS each day on time, in the morning and after lunch. • Contacting parents through Class Dojo or phone call if a child becomes ill during the day.
	Office Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers. • Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via SIMS. • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason by 10am. • Follow up with parents if no word heard from families and following up unexplained absences where no message has been returned. • Family Liaison Officer and Safeguarding Team informed with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required. • Logging attendance of all pupils going out/in school for medical, dental or visits.
	Family Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visits to be carried out for pupils that have had no message sent in to school. • Liaise with Office Staff and support with following up with families when no message received. • Informal discussions with identified pupils and families to follow up attendance issues and agree future action required. • Discuss with class teachers when required identified pupils of concern regarding specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required.
	EWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding home visits as required • Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families. • Phone call contact with parent/carers • Instigation of legal proceedings • Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to pastoral staff.
	Family Liaison & SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and Tracking of staff not completing registers • Safeguarding requirements • Liaison with EWO, Pastoral staff regarding support work with identified pupils.

When	Who?	Actions Expected
Weekly	Class Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all members of the class know the current school target and are aware of their students' current attendance. • Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by making contact with parent/carers where appropriate. • Liaise with Office staff, FLO and SMT.
	Office Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for the class teachers. • Continue liaison with FLO and SMT regarding no contact from child absence.
	Family Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visits to be carried out for pupils that have had no message sent in to school. • Identify patterns in absence, and follow up with class teachers, SMT/EWO • Organise support for families/children who are absent for a prolonged period of time.
	SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers • Safeguarding requirements • Liaison with EWO/FLO regarding support work with identified families.
Half Termly	Family Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement • Use attendance data to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils.
	SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that attendance features in all parents evenings. • Monitor and track attendance/PA Action Plans • Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re: Action plans or other pupils causing concern.
Termly	Family Liaison Officer & SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils in school. • School Attendance Review alongside EWO. • Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key part of school improvement. • Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and that systems are operating effectively. • Ensure information (i.e. Welcome packs/updates) promote attendance.
	Head Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with governors.