

# MANEY HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed by Staff:	June 2022
Governor Ratification Date:	June 2022
Next Review Date:	June 2025



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Introduction

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Maney Hill Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and arrive on time.

This policy applies to all children registered at this school. It is made available on our school website to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the headteacher and governors at the school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop and sustain good attendance habits.

## Aims

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues
- Maintain an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
- Raise awareness amongst parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents and staff so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Governing Board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis.
- holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- evaluating the effectiveness of this policy

### **Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Collating and recording registration and attendance information
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early
- Reporting concerns about individual pupil absence to the headteacher
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **Class teacher**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office
- Discussing attendance issues at parent consultation evenings, where necessary

## **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness, attendance at a medical or dental appointment, religious observance or other authorised reason (For the absence to be recorded as a medical/dental absence parents should provide evidence from the doctor or dentist. Medical appointments during school hours should be avoided where possible and the child should attend school before and after the medical appointment.)
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time
- Making requests for a leave of absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with

## **Attendance Monitoring**

### **Registration**

The classroom doors in Reception and Key Stage 1 are open from 8.45am – 8.55am and in Key Stage 2 from 9.00am – 9.05am.

Every class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teachers by 9.15am (morning) and by 1.45pm (afternoon).

All attendance records are documented using CMIS software on the school computers. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

### **Lateness**

Once the classroom doors are closed, the only way to get into school is via the main school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way will be signed in via 'Inventory' and marked as late in the attendance record.

Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L). Any child who arrives for school more than 30 minutes late will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning. (Attendance code U).

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

### **Authorised absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. Valid reasons for an authorised absence include: illness, medical or dental appointment, religious observance, secondary school entrance exam or other 'exceptional circumstance' where term-time leave may be granted by the headteacher.

### **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence and will be asked to provide the school with details of the reason for their child's absence. All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences.

### **First Day Contact**

Office staff check all class registers every morning before 9.30am, to identify those pupils who are absent. Where a child is absent from school and the school has not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, the attendance officer will initiate a first day contact process.

### **Illness**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. The school may seek written permission from parents for the school to make their own enquiries. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified.

### **Parental Request for a Leave of Absence due to Exceptional Circumstances**

The headteacher is allowed to grant a leave of absence if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist. Parents/carers should complete a request for a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances – see Appendix 1.

Term time holidays are not classified as exceptional circumstances and any requests will be unauthorised.

### **Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage**

- All staff are trained and made aware about possible reasons for extended absence from school.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a form of child abuse common to some African, Asian and Middle Eastern communities in the UK. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. Victims are usually aged between four and ten, primary school age.
- It is **illegal** in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Action to be taken with regards to FGM and Forced Marriage:

- Any information or concern that a child is at immediate risk of or has undergone FGM or forced marriage should result in a child protection referral under school procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance and then to Children's Services and/or the Child Protection Team, West Midlands Police Service.
- Records of all incidents will be kept following the same procedure as for all other child protection concerns in school in line with current policy.

## **Reporting to parents**

### **Absence**

At the end of every half term, the attendance officer and headteacher identify all children with attendance below 90%. Unless, there is a legitimate reason for the absence, the school will write to the parents/carers informing them of their child's attendance record and requesting an immediate improvement in the child's attendance.

### **Persistent Absence**

In order to reduce persistent absence, where attendance continues to be a concern, a meeting will be arranged with parents/carers and the headteacher to discuss strategies for improving attendance. Where appropriate, the SENDCo and external agencies may work in partnership with parents/carers to improve attendance, for example through 'Early Help' and the school will send weekly attendance letters to parents.

### **Annual Reports**

Included in every child's annual report to parents, the school shares the child's attendance record.

## **Legal Sanctions**

Children have a right to an education and parents have a legal duty to ensure their children regularly attend school.

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

# Appendix 1



## PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST - EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES (to be completed by parents/carers only)

Pupil's Name ..... D.O.B ..... Class .....

Pupil's Name ..... D.O.B ..... Class .....

I request permission for the above named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request:

.....  
 .....

Dates of absence:

From ..... To ..... No of school days .....

Address where we will be staying:

.....

Email address:

.....

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

- if travelling abroad, I/we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
- I/we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
- if I/we do not return at the agreed time; I/we am/are aware that I/we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I/we do not pay the fine, the case may be referred to Court which could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and a criminal record.
- In exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.

<b>Parent/Carer Name</b> ..... <b>DOB</b> ..... <b>Address</b> ..... ..... <b>Signature</b> ..... <b>Date</b> .....	<b>Parent/Carer Name</b> ..... <b>DOB</b> ..... <b>Address</b> ..... ..... <b>Signature</b> ..... <b>Date</b> .....
---	---

Absence will be recorded as **authorised / unauthorised**

Signed ..... Headteacher

Date:.....