

The Killigrew Partnership

ATTENDANCE POLICY JULY 2017

Introduction

The Killigrew Partnership believes that regular attendance and punctuality contribute to effective learning and enjoyment of school life. It is essential that we share this positive attitude with children and parents.

We work closely and regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and other agencies to promote and sustain good attendance patterns. Our aim is always to support families should any difficulties arise.

This policy reflects the vision and aims of The Killigrew Partnership 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

Children are expected to attend school for 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Principles

We will:

- Ensure that ALL members of staff are aware of our registration process and correct procedures for marking of daily registers.
- Ensure that the school always has up to date contact details for each family.
- Complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 5 minutes of the start of each session. Registers will close 30 minutes after school starts.
- Encourage parents/carers to contact school as early as possible on the first day of absence and ensure they are aware that they will receive a telephone call from the school secretary by 9.30 am if they have not done so.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after an absence.
- Liaise with members of the local community and Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining our Attendance Policy.
- Evaluate regularly our attendance rates and procedures.
- Appoint a named Governor responsible for attendance. **The School Development Committee will be responsible for this role at both St Francis School and King Charles school.**
- Strongly discourage parents from taking family holidays in term times. No absences for holidays will be authorised by the Head Teacher. If parents still decide to take their child on holiday, they are required to fill in an "Exceptional leave of absence" form.
- Discuss individual attendance at consultation evenings as a matter of course. An up to date print out of these rates will be available.
- These attendance figures will also be available and reviewed at each governor's meeting.

- Work towards ALL pupils feeling valued and supported and send a clear message that if a child is absent he/she will be missed.
- Have procedures in place so that any missed work can be completed as far as possible without disrupting the other children in class.
- Put in place positive rewards for good attendance so that pupils and parents are left in no doubt as to the value put upon this by the school community.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

From September 2013 there have been amendments to the Education Regulations (Pupil Registration 2006) Act. These amendments remove reference to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers **may not grant any leave of absence during term time** unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Whilst we understand that some absences may include times when a child is ill or attending appointments, preferably out of school time, it is important that school and home work together to try to ensure that all children have the best possible chance of success whilst at school. Added in from KC Policy as more up to date than what SF previously had

Categorising Absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. **All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.**

Parents should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Illness

In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances

This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded (No alternative provision made)

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Exceptional Leave

Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and are strongly advised not to do so. *School attendance : Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities November 2016*

Whilst requests for 'exceptional leave' will be considered on an individual basis, those that do not meet the requirements of the Department for Education's guidelines cannot be granted and the Falmouth Schools' Partnership will not permit (holiday) leave:

- where pupils'/students' attendance in the current term and over the previous two terms is less than 95%
- where pupils'/students' have a poor record of punctuality and/or need to catch up on work
- if any leave has been granted previously during the same school year
- during the month of September
- during ANY examination/assessment period, including mock exams and/or SATs
- for students in years 10 and 11 (*this applies to Falmouth School only*)

All requests for leave of absence must be made via the relevant form (see Appendix 1, paper copies are available from the school office) and will be responded to in writing. **This form must be completed and returned to the school at least two weeks prior to the exceptional leave of absence.**

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, the school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

When the school receives an exceptional leave request form for a family holiday, the request will only be authorized if there are extenuating circumstances. Reasons relating to financial advantage, convenience and personal preference will not be considered as extenuating circumstances and requests referencing these will not be authorised. In addition, repeat requests for holiday leave will not be authorised as the request no longer can be categorised as "exceptional." For all other exceptional leave requests, parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss the request.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil still goes on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases the school may issue a Penalty Notice (please see Section 6 - Legal Sanctions)

Only in exceptional circumstances will absences be agreed. In such cases, consideration will also be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as minority ethnic children returning to their country of origin. In these cases granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified.

Procedure

Registration

- This takes place twice a day, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions

- The morning register at St Francis takes place at 8.50 and the afternoon register takes place at 1.15 pm.
- The morning register at King Charles takes place at 8.50 in KS2 and 9.00 in Rec/KS1 and the afternoon register takes place at 1.00 in Rec/KS1 and 1.15 pm.in KS2.
- When a pupil arrives at any other time of the day, they must report to the office staff who will amend the electronic register immediately (if the reason for absence is unclear or potentially unauthorised e.g overslept, the office staff will write a message on the electronic register for class teachers to address later)
- Our registers are the SIMS electronic registers which are processed weekly
- Teachers complete a laminated copy of the register, identifying absent pupils. This will be stored in a highly visible place e.g above the teacher's desk, and will be used in the case of evacuation.
- Supply teachers will not be expected to complete the electronic register, but will use the laminated copy. Class teachers will then transfer this information at the next available time.

Late Arrival at St Francis

- Registration begins at 8.50 am, pupils arriving in the twenty five minute period after this time will be marked as present but arriving late, Code L
- The register will close at 9.15 am and pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, Code U, this will count as an absence for that school session.
- If the child arrives later than 9.15 am this absence will then be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment, and Code U replaced by the appropriate code
- If the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if their parents woke up late, the absence will continue to be recorded as unauthorised

Late Arrival at King Charles

- Registration begins at 8.50 am for KS2 and 9.00 for Rec/KS1, pupils arriving in the period after this time and before 9.30 will be marked as present but arriving late, Code L
- The register will close at 9.30 am and pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, Code U, this will count as an absence for that school session.
- If the child arrives later than 9.30 am this absence can then be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment, and Code U replaced by the appropriate code
- If the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if their parents woke up late, the absence will continue to be recorded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unauthorised absences/ unacceptable explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping, including for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school
- Absences which have never been properly explained

Procedure for **parents** in the case of absence

We ask parents to contact the school on the first day of absence, as soon as possible (and no later than 9.30am if possible) - either personally, by telephone, letter, email or fax. If verbal contact has been made, further confirmation in writing is always appreciated.

School procedure in the case of absence

Following morning registration, class teachers immediately pass on the names of absent pupils to the school office. If the child has not arrived at school by 9.30 a.m, office staff will then contact home to determine the reason for absence.

Please note: It is essential that parents keep the school informed of current address and telephone number and accurate details of further contacts.

If a child is absent for 3 days without explanation, the appointed Attendance Manager will be contacted and set procedures put into place.

Monitoring of absence

Registers are processed weekly and we also print out a monthly report, and can generate individual absence records, which the EWO and Executive Headteacher monitor regularly and use to decide appropriate courses of action. Standard letters are available to send to parents concerning absences and punctuality.

The annual statistics are sent to the DfES each May and the school has attendance targets, which must be met each year. Each parent receives an attendance record of their child in July.

Support Systems

The Killigrew Partnership is committed to providing a full educational experience for ALL pupils and believes that, if pupils are to benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum in which they achieve their full potential, good attendance is crucial.

We recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children. Similarly poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance.

Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with parents and pupils (age appropriate). Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Involvement of Parent Support Advisor
- Attendance clinics
- Regular attendance information provided for parents
- Referrals to support agencies
- Friendship groups
- PSHE
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials
- Family learning
- Reward systems
- Time limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the school will consider the use of legal sanctions.

Very important – All parents are advised to let the school know of any attendance problem so that support can be arranged.

Legal Sanctions

Prosecution

Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken.

Any parent taking a child out of school without permission will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. The matter may be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may decide to prosecute under the Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) with a maximum fine of £1000. For an offence under the Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) the maximum fine is £2500 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 3 months. Alternatively, a penalty notice may be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1966. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Killigrew Partnership believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Agree school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year and where appropriate link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department of Children, Schools and Families as required and on time
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Children, Schools and Families as required and on time
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body

- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

Class teachers and support staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

The Killigrew Partnership requests that Parents will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time, where this is unavoidable, complete the relevant request form and submit to the school in advance of booking the holiday.
- Keep the school updated with their contact details.

The Killigrew Partnership Attendance Policy was agreed by the Full Governing Board of The Killigrew Partnership at their meeting on 11th July 2017 and will be reviewed annually.



Falmouth Partnership Exceptional Leave Form

(Please read the notes on the back of this form before you complete it and return it to your child's school.)

Child's Name: _____ Class or tutor group: _____

Do you have a child and/or children in another Falmouth Partnership school for whom you are also requesting exceptional leave? N / Y If Y which school do they attend? _____

First day of absence from school: _____

Last day of absence from school: _____

Total number of days absent: _____

Why are you planning an absence during the school term? Please include any information you would like us to consider.

Name and Address of employers: _____

I have read the notes overleaf. The information I have given on this form is correct:

Signature of parent or carer: _____ Date: _____

For school use only

Request approved / not approved: _____ Date: _____

Code: _____ Notes: _____

Headteacher's signature: _____ Date: _____

Review of attendance coding following changes to DFE guidance

There have been amendments to the Education Regulations (Pupil Registration 2006) act. These amendments remove reference to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Whilst we understand that some absences may include times when your child is ill or attending appointments, preferably out of school time, it is important that we all work together to try to ensure that your child has the best possible chance of success whilst at school.

Warning

If you take your child out of school without permission you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service who may decide to prosecute. A conviction may result in a fine of up to £2,500, a prison sentence of up to three months or both. Alternatively, a penalty notice may be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1966. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action.

If you have a problem getting your child to school let us know. We may be able to help.

Whilst requests for 'exceptional leave' will be considered on an individual basis, those that do not meet the requirements of the Department for Education's guidelines cannot be granted and the Falmouth Schools Partnership will not permit (holiday) leave:

- where pupils'/students' attendance in the current term and over the previous two terms is less than 95%
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