



PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

Introduction

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The 'otherwise' includes home education.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations make provisions for the necessity of admission registers and attendance registers of pupils as well as the granting of leave of absence for pupils. Parents may not authorise absence; only headteachers or those authorised by the headteacher can do this. Schools may authorise any absence but inappropriate use can be just as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence.

Monitoring and controlling school attendance are a key part of Pippins School's objectives. We believe that:

- Responsibility for promoting school attendance is shared by everyone in the school.
- The attendance policy touches all aspects of the school's life, and relates directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- Rigorous collection and analysis of data about attendance enables the school to check its progress against measurable outcomes.

Attendance at school is a vital part of a pupil's education and has a heightened profile in this school with the headteacher having responsibility for whole school attendance as well as oversight of the school's pupil welfare system.

The governors and headteacher believe that it is important that the children in their care do not lose any schooling unnecessarily. In the primary phase, this places the responsibility on parents and carers to ensure regular attendance.

Objectives and targets

The aims of the attendance policy are:

- To encourage pupils to attend school regularly and therefore be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.
- To secure attendance at school unless absence is authorised.
- To identify problem areas that would explain non-attendance.
- To work together with parents and the educational social worker where necessary to maintain good attendance, securing help for pupils and/or parents with problems.

Pippins School has implemented the following procedures:

- Publication regularly to the parents and pupils of the arrangements for notifying absence and the school's policy towards authorised absence via the school's website and by other means as necessary.
- The governors, headteacher and members of staff are also kept aware of the school's policy on attendance and absence.
- A reward system for good attendance at school.
- A first day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge.
- The headteacher will be responsible for attendance and will liaise with the LA on measures to be taken if a pupil appears to be missing from education.

In order to deal with attendance problems effectively and efficiently, the following strategy will be followed by the school:

- In line with the Education Secretary's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice in relation to the coronavirus pandemic for their child not to attend a given session, the new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.
- Registers will be marked accurately according to DfE guidance document School attendance www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance and further guidance from the DfE in relation to the coronavirus pandemic and in the register files.
- Attendance records kept for every class and all non-attendance checked against the daily register that will be taken at the beginning of the morning session and before the last period of the afternoon.
- A monthly computer print-out will highlight any pupil whose attendance is below 90% and their parents will be informed of this and asked to attend an interview with the headteacher and class teacher (**unless the reasons are coronavirus related**). Parents will be reminded of their obligations to ensure attendance and a programme of support will be agreed if necessary. On a second occurrence, parents will be reminded of the legal action that can be taken and the fine that can be imposed.
- A monthly, class-by-class, check by teachers of any student whose attendance is below 90%.
- Parents will be sent the list of authorised absences together with a pro-forma to be used to inform the school about any such absence.
- The education welfare service will be informed about continued/regular absence or habitual lateness.

- Family holidays must be requested at least a fortnight in advance, will be considered on an individual basis and will not normally be granted except in exceptional circumstances.
- Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the LA have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. The governors and headteacher of Pippins School have safeguarding procedures in place which follow DfE statutory guidance to follow up any such absences and will liaise with the LA on measures to be taken if a pupil appears to be missing from education.
- Where children are subject to Child Protection or Child in Need plans, office staff will ensure that any child who is absent in the educational setting without explanation is referred to the DSL who will then liaise with the child's key worker's Social Care Team. Children who have previously been looked after or who are in a Special Guardianship arrangement will be monitored closely.
- At all times, parents will be informed of problems with any of the above.

Parents will have the responsibility to:

- Make sure their children are educated between the age of 5 and 11 to the fullest extent.
- Inform the school on the first day of absence and secure prior authority for authorised absences.
- Co-operate with school and the education welfare service if there are attendance problems.
- Make sure that their child has had a good night's sleep – children need to be wide-awake to learn.

Monitoring and evaluation

The headteacher will keep attendance regularly under review and report to the governing board once a term on the attendance figures and any particular problems.

The policy will be evaluated by the governors following reports from the senior management, education welfare officer and others.

ADDENDUM – SEPTEMBER 2021

Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19

The DfE has published guidance on how schools should record attendance or non-attendance and this school follows those guidelines.

This category must be used to record sessions that take place in the 2021 to 2022 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19

This category must only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

The [schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#) sets out when pupils should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable pupils should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.

If shielding is advised nationally or in a local area again, by DHSC, PHE or UKHSA, then pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA should be recorded as code X.

Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test

In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance: guidance for schools](#).

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we expect schools to offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.