



Student Attendance Policy

Date reviewed: November 2023

Next review by: November 2024

Person Responsible: Mrs R Seagar – Headteacher at Priory Rise

Aim

Every day a child spends in school is important; if children do not attend school regularly this presents as a significant barrier to their learning. Priory Rise School therefore takes a robust approach to supporting good attendance and punctuality as we believe that this is vital to enabling children to maximise their potential to learn and thrive in school.

Registration Procedure

All children should arrive in time for their year group start for school as detailed on the staggered start schedule for each year group. Registers are taken punctually at the beginning of the day and then again for the afternoon session. As soon as the register is completed it is sent to the school office. Any children arriving after their allocated close of register time are recorded as 'late after registration'. The school also records the time children arrive late and the reason for their late arrival. Persistent lateness will be investigated and steps taken to support the family to get the children to school on time. Should timekeeping not improve parents/carers may receive a fine. Registers are completed manually during the week and then transferred 'electronically' on Friday onto the school's data base.

Non Attendance

We ask parents to report their child's absence as soon as possible in the morning if they are unwell and unable to attend school. There is an absence reporting recorded message service on the telephone which enables parents to telephone the school early in the morning and leave a message. Any children absent without notification from parents are noted and the school administrator telephones the parent as soon as possible in the morning. If a child has been diagnosed with a particular illness that means they will be absent for several days, we ask that the school is informed of this. Where parents are not certain how long their child will be off school, we ask that parents telephone each day. In addition, when a child returns to school from a period of illness we ask parents to provide a written note explaining why their child has been absent. If we have received no notification from parents explaining why their child is absent then the absence will automatically be recorded as unauthorised. Where children have had a tummy bug, they should not return to school until 36-48 hours after their last bout of sickness: this is to prevent cross contamination/infection as even once the symptoms have alleviated the children may still be at risk of infecting others.

Leave of Absence for Holidays

The school is **unable** to consider or grant any authorised leave of absence for any holidays or days out.

Leave of Absence Requests for Exceptional Circumstances

Absences when a **child is sick** or has a medical or dental appointment which cannot be arranged out of school hours will be **authorised**. However, if the absence concerns a medical or dental issue related to another member of the family, the school will not usually be **able to authorise** this absence.

Any Exceptional Circumstance Leave of Absence Requests must normally **be received at least 10 school days in advance**. It is important that parents make any exceptional circumstance requests in plenty of time to enable the school to have **time to consider the request and respond appropriately**. The governing board has discussed and agreed the exceptional circumstances under which absences may be authorised. However, parents need to be aware that authorisation for these events is at the **discretion of the headteacher**; it is **not guaranteed**. Birthday celebrations and special family gatherings are not considered to be exceptional.

The headteacher will consider each request individually and will also take into account the child's attendance and punctuality record for previous years and up to the date the request is made. For exceptional circumstance events, **1 day's absence only** will usually be authorised unless the event is some considerable distance away, in which case the headteacher will take into account travelling arrangements.

In addition, please note that the school may ask for documented evidence to support any applications for leave of absence.

Examples of Reasons for Exceptional Leave	Notes
A visit to another school which the child will soon be joining	
Taking the entrance examination for another school	
Sitting an award bearing music or dance exam or attending a residential visit organised by the Milton Keynes Music Centre	Residential visits occurring in the period during or prior to the assessment period in May will not be authorised
Taking part in an exceptional sporting event	For example playing in a county or regional fixture
Taking part in a theatre performance licensed by a Local Education Authority	
Attending the marriage/civil ceremony of the child's parents or an immediate family member	Please ensure that proof of attendance at these occasions is attached when applying for authorised leave of absence
Attending the funeral of a close family member	
A religious observance	
Compassionate leave	For example following a close family bereavement

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance registers are monitored each week and if there are any immediate concerns the headteacher contacts parents to discuss their child's attendance. At the end of each month a full summary of each child's attendance and punctuality is reviewed more fully and if the school has any concerns about a child's attendance the parents are contacted by letter.

Where there are significant concerns and a child is 'persistently absent' or there have been a number of unauthorised absences, the school may issue formal warning letters and the school will consider a referral to the local authority.

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)

A fine for poor attendance becomes effective if a child has had ten or more unauthorised sessions or five days absence. These do not need to be consecutive absences.

- An FPN can be issued to each parent and is per child
- A fine of £60 per child per parent/carer is payable in 21 days and, if there is a failure to pay after that time, it raises to £120 per child per parent/carer, payable in 28 days
- If the fine remains unpaid after 28 days then the parent(s) or carer(s) may be prosecuted
- FPNs may also be issued if children are late for school on a significant number of occasions

Summary

It is the expectation that all children attend school for every planned session in the school year.

We hope the school's approach to attendance is clear and that it sets out for parents the school's position on leave of absence and the importance the school places on good attendance.

*Please note that children in nursery are not of statutory school age and therefore the regulations regarding leave of absence and holiday leave do not apply.