



VALLEY INVICTA
PRIMARY SCHOOL AT
LEYBOURNE CHASE

Attendance Policy

Key document details

Policy number:
SS2

Policy type
School

Colleague responsible:
Headteacher

Date:
September 2021

Next review:
September 2022

Attendance Policy

Statement of Intent

Our School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all pupils.

Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. Our School actively promotes 100% attendance for all of our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual rewards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role, and a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and we promise to identify, investigate and work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and other agencies to resolve attendance problems.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. To this end, it is desirable that parents should be the first line of contact whenever the child is absent from school.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school whenever the child is absent and on the first day of absence before 9.30 a.m. If this does not happen then the school will contact the home to ascertain why the pupil is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.30am. Registration is at 8.35am. All pupils that arrive late must report, with their parent to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded. If a pupil arrives after the registers have closed at 9.00am, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

The Role of the School Staff

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for attendance. The Attendance Officer has the responsibility for informing the Head Teacher of any cause for concern.

Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Class Teachers complete the register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late.

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided by 9.30am, parents are contacted on the first day of absence via text/phone call.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes)

Timeline of School Action for Low Attendance

The school target is for students to achieve 98% attendance.

- 95 – 100% attendance – The Attendance Officer will monitor and notify the Head Teacher of concerns;



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- 90 – 95% attendance – The Attendance Officer will write to parents highlighting the percentage of absence and the possibility of Penalty Notice referral. The Head Teacher and the School Liaison Officer will be notified of concerns;
- Regular minor absences – The Attendance Officer will write to parents highlighting the percentage of absence and investigate and notify the Head Teacher of concerns and the School Liaison Officer;
- If your child attendance falls below 90% the Headteacher may refuse to authorise further absences without confirmation of illness from the Health Services (appointment card, prescription etc). If the situation does not improve the Headteacher will invite parents or guardians for a meeting to discuss the issues and may involve the School Nurse or School Liaison Officer;
- A Penalty Notice will be issued after 10 sessions of absence in any 100 session period (50 days).

Children Missing Education

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

Lateness

At our school, pupils are expected to arrive by 8.30 a.m. Registration is at 8.35am. All pupils arriving after 8.30a.m. should enter the school via the school office.

Any pupils arriving after 8.35am will be recorded as late before the register closes (L). The register will close at 9.00am. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (code U) and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

A pattern of late attendance or regular late attendance will be investigated. In the first instance a call to the parents requesting a meeting will be made. Offer of help and advice will be made and attendance for that child will be monitored.

Authorised/Non Authorised Absence

Absence must be unavoidable, if no explanation is received, absence will not be authorised:

- The legal responsibility for ensuring pupils attend school regularly and punctually rests with parents/carers.
- As stated above, it is the responsibility of the parents/carers to be the first line of contact and to contact the school whenever a student is absent and on the first day of absence before 9.30a.m.
- It is the school which authorises the absence, not the parent/carer.
- Absence is either authorised, such as in the case of illness or of religious observance, or unauthorised, when there is no reason given for such absence or when it is considered that the explanation is unjustified or unreasonable.

Examples of non-authorised absence are:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence due to a sibling being ill
- Oversleeping
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/Dental appointment of more than half day without a very good reason
- Child's/family birthday or outing

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Leave of Absence/Holiday

From September 2013 the Department for Education have amended the Pupil Registration.

Regulations, removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- With leave (the school has given permission);
- Due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent);
- Religious observance;
- Failure by the LA to provide transport.

In law, these are the only acceptable reason for a child being absent from school.

The Head Teacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Head Teacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Head Teacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Exceptional Circumstances

Family holidays, for whatever reason, cannot be approved, even if the parent is unable to take time off work at any other time. An "exceptional circumstance" would have to be defined as an unavoidable cause e.g., a one-off emergency situation which prevents the child from attending school.

Requests for holidays in term time will not be authorised. If the absence is not authorised and holiday is taken anyway, the case will be referred to the Head Teacher who will issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Penalty Notice Proceedings of Unauthorized Holiday Absence

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Service Code of Conduct. A request to issue a Penalty Notice will be made to the Attendance Service for an unauthorised holiday of 10 or more school sessions (5 days). One Penalty Notice is issued per child.

If Penalty Notice(s) is/are not paid within 42 days of issue, the Attendance Service may instigate court proceedings.

Regular attendance is vital in order to raise standards and pupil achievement.

The Head Teacher, by appointment, is willing to discuss with families attendance difficulties as well as offering internal and external support for the good of the child.