

Attendance Policy

Document Control

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The staff and Governors at Mere Green Primary School are committed to ensuring the highest possible school attendance for all its pupils. We understand that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

Our aim at Mere Green is quite simple. We will work alongside parents and families to endeavour that pupil attendance is well above the national average. We will do this so that we can ensure that our children have the best possible chance to achieve at school and that they can begin their adult lives with at least the same chances as those others they will be competing with in their future lives of training and employment.

EXPECTATIONS

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school regularly
- attend school punctually
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually prepared for the school day
- ensure that they contact the school when ever the child/children is unable to attend school
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence and send a note on their return to school
- contact the school promptly whenever a problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

We expect that our school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, twice daily
- monitor every pupil's attendance
- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes authorising the absence

- contact those families whose child's attendance has dropped below 90% on a termly basis
- encourage good attendance
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment; provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LEA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher

ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE

Mere Green Primary School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- by responding promptly to a child or parents' concerns about the school or other pupils
- by marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at school after the close of the register without a written explanation, the lateness will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the pupil's name recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill
- by publishing and displaying attendance statistics
- by celebrating good and improved attendance 100% is rewarded on a termly basis and is cumulative over the course of the year.
- by monitoring pupils attendance and informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, or when their child's attendance drops below 90%
- arranging meetings with parents/carers if necessary and referring the family

RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, for all irregular attendees, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 10am the school will endeavour to contact them that day. If the family are not on the telephone, a letter will be sent.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made (third day if waiting for a response to a letter), the school will send a letter of concern to the parent/carer or invite them into the school to discuss their concerns.
- Failure to comply with the expectations may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision order, or court prosecution.

PENALTY NOTICE

The government has given local education authorities the power to issue fixed penalty notices where parents or carers are considered capable of but unwilling to ensure their child attends school regularly. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act introduced these additional powers in February 2004. Penalty notices are aimed at "unauthorised absences" – times when a child misses school without a valid reason (or without permission from the school) or if a child is regularly late getting into school. Parents could also be issued with a penalty notice if they take their child on holiday during term time.

CHANGING SCHOOLS

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform our school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from our school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving our school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Governors:

- Adopt and review the Attendance Policy
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided
- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents of irregular attendees
- Consult and liaise closely with the attendance officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
- Institute an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards
- Monitor and evaluate attendance

Class teachers

- To complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- To follow up any unexplained non-attendance
- To record all reasons for absences in the register
- To inform the Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher of attendance concerns