

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. All children have the right to an efficient full-time education. Perran-ar-worthal School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of its pupils. Irregular attendance disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and may impede a child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

What is expected of pupils

2. Pupils are expected to do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually and encourage other pupils to feel happy at school.

What is expected of parents

3. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered.

4. Parents are expected to:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn
- keep requests for their children to be absent to a minimum
- provide a reason for any lateness or period of absence
- work closely with the school to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- take family holidays during school holiday periods, not during term time
- be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance at important times, such as during SATS.

5. A reason for a period of absence is always required, preferably before the absence. If a child is ill or prevented from attending that day for an unavoidable reason, parents should phone the school office after 8.45am and before 9.30am. A message can be left on the office phone if necessary.

6. Requests for holidays during term time shall not be authorized by the headteacher unless authorization is sought in advance and special or exceptional

This policy was approved by the governing body on 18th November 2009, with delegated authority to Mr Halford and Mr Bridges to make 'minor rewording and correction of grammatical errors.' The policy was reviewed by the full governing body on 12th July 2012. The policy was further reviewed and approved on 11th July 2013 when the paragraph on requests for holidays during term time was amended. The policy was further amended on 10th July 2014, reviewed on 23rd July 2015, reviewed on 18th July 2016, 20th July 2017 and amended on 19th July 2018.

circumstances are identified.¹ If parents wish to request a period of absence for their child, they must complete the correct form (see Appendix 1), which is available from the school office or can be down loaded from the school website. Part of the form will be returned showing whether or not the absence has been authorized. Schools have been directed not to authorize absence for family holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. service family limitations. All schools within the Penryn Partnership have agreed to honour this directive.

7. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This is to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

8. If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognize their parenting role where attendance at school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school, education welfare services and the social services where such a child's attendance is irregular.

What is expected of the school

9. The school will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive to educating every individual pupil. The school will:

- create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
- encourage open communication channels between home and school
- meet all statutory requirements in relation to attendance
- give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
- follow up unauthorized absences, patterns of absence and absences condoned by parents
- develop effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long-term absenteeism and reintegrate long-term absentees.

Recording and monitoring attendance

10. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance must be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register must record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence is authorized or unauthorized.

11. The class teacher will take a register recording who is present and absent from school at 9.05am. The register officially closes at 9.30am and any pupil arriving after this will be marked as "late (after register closed)" – code U.

¹ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amend the 2006 Regulations to clarify that leave of absence during term time shall not be granted unless there are "exceptional circumstances" (our underlining).

12. During the morning, the absences from that morning and the previous afternoon will be recorded on the electronic registration system and all the pupils present marked as 'present'. Any absences will be assessed and the appropriate code entered into the system. The register is returned to the class teacher before the start of the afternoon session and the register is again taken at 1.00pm.

Strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality

13. Our aim is to promote punctuality and track persistent lateness that may need to be addressed. Pupils are expected to arrive at school between 8.45am and 9am. At 9:00am the classroom doors are locked. Any parents arriving at school with their child after 9:00am must report to the office to sign their child in and provide a reason for lateness.

14. Every class teacher will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that they can succeed.

15. Teachers will share attendance figures with parents at termly parental consultation meetings.

16. Pupil attendance figures will be published with the annual academic reports.

17. The headteacher and the EWO will review the attendance of all the school's pupils each term and identify any pupil whose absence is a cause for concern.

18. The local authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote the regular attendance of all statutory school-age children. Through the education welfare service, the local authority provides support to schools and parents to fulfill their legal duty. The education welfare service is the enforcement agency of the local authority and, as well as providing guidance and support through its officers, may take a parent to court for not meeting their legal responsibilities in relation to ensuring the attendance of their child at school.

19. Further information may be found in guidance issued by the local authority.

Appendix 1: Request for approval of absence during school hours

Please read the notes on the back of this form before you fill it in.

Section A (to be completed by the parent or guardian)

Child's name:

Class:

First day of absence from school:

Last day of absence from school:

Total number of days absent:

Reason for the proposed absence:

Medical

Holiday

Other

Please give any special or exceptional circumstances that you would like to be considered to justify removing your child from school during school hours:

Signature of parent of carer:

Date:

Section B (to be completed by the school)

The request for absence during school hours is approved / not approved.

Headteacher's signature:

Date:

Section C (to be completed by the school and returned to the parent)

The request for (name of pupil)
to be absent during school hours from _____ to _____
is approved /not approved.

Headteacher's signature:

Date:

Notes on requests for approval of absence during school hours

20. The government insists that school governors and headteachers follow certain legal requirements in the running of their schools, among which are those covering school attendance. The notes below are based on guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Cornwall Council.

The value of regular attendance

21. Your child must attend school regularly, especially to gain the maximum benefit from their education. Research shows that pupils perform better if their parents or carers emphasise the importance of attending school.

Your legal responsibilities

22. You have a legal duty to make sure your child attends school regularly and punctually. The school and the local authority monitor your child's attendance and will take action if it is poor.

Absence for a family holiday

23. The government recommends that family holidays are taken outside school terms.

24. Headteachers may give permission for a pupil to go on holiday during term time only if there are special or exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will consider the reasons for the holiday, the pupil's past attendance, and the effects the absence will have on the pupil's learning. The headteacher will not normally give permission simply because holidays cost less during term time.

25. If you have to take your family holiday during school term, please do not assume that you will automatically get permission for the absence because you have filled in the form. Please wait to hear if the headteacher agrees to your request.

26. We publish the dates of school terms well ahead. This is to help you plan your holidays. When you book your holiday, please check that it does not clash with the school term.

Warning

27. If you take your child out of school without permission you 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. 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 1996. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 28 days or £120 if paid after this but within 42 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice may result in court action.