

Premier Learning



LEARNING COMMUNITY

PERSONAL BELIEF

MORAL PURPOSE

Pupil Attendance Policy



Pupil Attendance Policy

School staff were consulted on this document on:	November 2017
It was ratified by the Board of Trustees on:	26th January 2018
Next Review Date:	January 2021 (or earlier if deemed necessary)



Premier Learning Trust

Pupil Attendance Policy

AIMS

Premier Learning Trust is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this pupil attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures. Attendance/absence targets are set which reflect both National and Essex attendance targets. Please note, from April 2011 the government requirement to set attendance targets ceased. We will review systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure we are achieving our set goal.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance goal.

Statements of Expectations

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

What is expected of the pupils:

- ◆ To respect themselves and others
- ◆ To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
- ◆ To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
- ◆ To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.



Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly, and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children. The expectation is that children should attend every day that the school is open to them.

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

What is expected of the parents/carers;

- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum
- To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence using the school absence line, SchoolComms text system or telephoning the school office staff
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time (the school day begins at 8.45am (Holland Park), 8.55am (Alton Park), properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- To work closely with the school and Missing Education & Child Employment Service (MECES) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in compassionate / exceptional circumstances
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to attendance during important academic times such as SATS
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements.

Premier Learning Trust Schools will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive in educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. 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 has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to 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 was authorised or unauthorised. The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006 clearly state that where a parent provides a reason for absence, the school decides whether or not the absence(s) in question are recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

What is expected of the School:

- To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
- To meet the legal requirements set out by Government
- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
- To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
- To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 Education Act
- To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absence and promote good attendance
- To encourage open communication channels between home and school
- To develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees
- To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to MECES
- To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum

As a Trust, our schools have a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children. This has been delegated to the Missing Education & Child Employment Service (MECES) which the Local Authority provides. MECES is the enforcement agency of the LA and, as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO), an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school].



Only the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher/Head of School or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded as N (NO reason yet provided for absence) in the first instance.

Lateness

Children arriving after the school bell at 8.45am (Holland Park), 8.55am (Alton Park) should report to the main school office to be signed in. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes after the normal beginning of the school day. Any pupil arriving between these times will be marked as being present. There is then an additional 30 minute window and pupils arriving within this period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late. Any pupil arriving after this time may be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered once evidence has been submitted for this.

The afternoon register will close 30 mins after the beginning of afternoon registration.

It should be noted that pupils will be marked as late even if the circumstances for this lateness has been approved by the school.

Late Collections

It is disruptive for children to arrive at school late but it is also distressing for children to be left late at the end of the day. We understand that emergency situations can occur that prevent a prompt collection but children should be collected at the appropriate times, ie Year 3 at 3.10pm and Years 4, 5 and 6 at 3.15pm. All collections should be from the playground unless prior permission has been requested in writing. In the event that you cannot collect your child on time you should:-

- Ensure you inform the school before 2.00pm of any alternative collection arrangements. We cannot guarantee to inform Class Teachers of alternative collection arrangements if the school office is not informed before 2.00pm. If a message is received after 2.00pm and the office has been unable to pass it to the relevant class then your child may not be released in the playground but be brought into the school building in order that staff can seek further clarification of the arrangements.





- Contact a friend or family member to see if they can collect your child at the correct time.
- Arrange for your child to attend the Alton Park After School Provision Club for which there will be a charge for 1 hour or part thereof (as at November 2017 this charge stands at £3). This club runs until 4.15pm on each school day when we would expect parents to arrive promptly to collect their child.

Late Collections



It is disruptive for children to arrive at school late but it is also distressing for children to be left late at the end of the day. We understand that emergency situations can occur that prevent a prompt collection but children should be collected at 3.00pm in Early Years, Year 1 and Year 2 and 3.05pm from Year 3 onwards. All collections should be from the playground unless prior permission has been requested in writing. In the event that you cannot collect your child on time you should:

- Ensure you inform the school before 2.00pm of any alternative collection arrangements. We cannot guarantee to inform Class Teachers of alternative collection arrangements if the school office is not informed before 2.00pm. In these instances, children will be taken to the office once all the other children have been released. The office staff will then be able to pass on any new arrangements.
- Contact a friend or family member to see if they can collect your child at the correct time.
- Arrange after school care with another provider such as The Chase Nursery, Willow Tree Nursery, etc. (There will be a charge for this service.)

Please be aware that at 3.30pm most support staff leave for the day so your child will be sent to The Chase Nursery if we have not heard from you or if they remain uncollected at 3.30pm. This will incur charges.

First Day Absence

If there has been no notification to the class teacher/school office/school's absence line the Administrative Team will contact the parents/carers directly by SchoolComms text message or telephone to ascertain the reason for absence. This would be repeated on day three if no further contact has been made.



Third Day Absence



If a child is still away after three days, continued efforts are made to ascertain the reason for the absence. On the 4th day we would attempt to visit the home and leave a calling card requesting parent to contact the school to explain the continued absence.



If a child is still away after three days and the reason is unknown despite attempts to contact the parents/carers by telephone then, a standard letter will be posted home requesting that they contact the school urgently to notify the reason for absence. This could be hand delivered during a home visit.

Continuing Absence

If there has still been no contact with the parents the Administrative Team will bring the case to the attention of the Headteacher/Head of School who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent, without an explanation, for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to MECES. The school will include details of the action they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Administrative Team to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one.

In other cases the school will seek advice from the Missing Education & Child Employment Service. Family Liaison Workers may also be able to provide parents/carers with support in increasing attendance for pupils.

Safeguarding

For all absences where there has been no notification *and* there are safeguarding concerns the school will attempt to make contact on the first day of absence and inform the relevant safeguarding services if we are unable to do this.



	1st Stage Absence	2nd Stage - After period of absence	3rd Stage - After period of absence	4th Stage - after period of absence
Parent	Contacts school with reason by phone and/or letter.	Parent provides a letter stating reason for absence.	Parent returns slip from letter with reason.	Parent returns slip from letter with reason.
School	School will phone parent to inform them that the child is not in school and enquire about a reason why.	School sends a letter requesting a reason for absence, informing parent absence will be unauthorised if no response within 5 days.	The register is marked appropriately with reason for absence provided by parent.	The register is marked as an unauthorised absence if no response from parent after 5 days.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence, all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, requiring further investigation, the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School agreement is used to support good attendance at school.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time are no longer authorised and any holiday absence of five days or more may incur a penalty notice. Parents will be reminded that requests for holidays will be refused except in compassionate/exceptional circumstances. Parents must apply in advance for permission submitting a request in writing to the Headteacher/Head of School using the absence request form available at the school office.



From September 2018 parents will also be subject to a penalty notice for three days of absence during the first two weeks of the new academic year. All absences are considered on a case by case basis to decide if exceptional circumstances apply. All requests should be submitted giving adequate time for a written response to be sent by the school.

The Registration System

The School will use SIMS computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information:

- C Other circumstances (e.g. bereavement, agreed special occasions, performances, other approved absences not covered by other codes).
- E Excluded
- H Family holiday (agreed)
- I Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)
- M Medical / Dental appointments
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Traveller absence

APPROVED EDUCATION ACTIVITY

- B Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
- D Dual registration (ie pupil attending other establishment)
- J Interview
- P Approved sporting activity
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience



UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- G Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- O Unauthorised absence
- U Late (after registers closed)

Registers, by law, are kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes. Alternatively electronic back-up copies are made. These also need preserving for at least three years.

If completed by hand black pens must be used when marking the OMR register. All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers are stored in the Administrative Secure Cupboard for the first year and then moved to the school's archive cupboard.

Monitoring

The Executive Headteacher, Headteacher/Head of School, Welfare Manager and MECES will review the attendance of all the schools pupils on a regular basis. Pupils identified as cause for concern or with less than 95% attendance, are monitored more closely. A letter will be sent to the parent/carer of any pupil identified as having attendance problems informing them of the school's concerns and offering support to resolve any problems that may be impeding a child from attending. The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and, if after a two week period there appears to be no improvement, the parents of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher/Head of School to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any problems preventing the pupil from attending.

If the parent/carers do not attend the meeting, or after such a meeting, the attendance of the pupil does not improve a formal referral to MECES will be made. Any family whose child's attendance drops below 90% will be considered to be persistently absent. The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance.



These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school to strategically manage attendance issues. MECES will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support their role.



NEMAT have also been commissioned to support Holland Park Primary School in tackling pupil attendance concerns.

Strategies used to promote good attendance and punctuality

1. Class teacher will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel they have and can succeed.
2. Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals.
3. Pupil attendance figures will be published with their annual academic reports.
4. Positive verbal reinforcement will be given to pupils who have been absent from school for a period of time and an education action plan developed to help them catch up with any missed curriculum and promote future attendance.
5. Weekly attendance rates are shared with whole school and the class with the highest attendance rate for the previous week are celebrated in a whole-school assembly.
6. Prizes are awarded at the end of the academic year to pupils who have 100% attendance throughout the year.
7. Certificates may also be awarded for those children who have shown remarkable improvement or who have overcome medical or other difficulties to attend school and achieve a good level of attendance.



Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

The legal requirements for keeping Register and Admission Roll are found in: The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity.

1. Unauthorised Absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised Absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.



3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note - Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Other useful links:

The link between Absence and attainment

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf

Essex code of conduct for penalty notices

https://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Attending-School/Documents/Essex_code_of_conduct.pdf

Contact details for the Missing Education and Child Employment Service (MECES)

Mid ME&CE.mid@essex.gov.uk Telephone: 0333 013 9944	North East ME&CE.NE@essex.gov.uk Telephone: 0333 013 9983
South ME&CE.south@essex.gov.uk Telephone: 0333 013 9845	West ME&CE.West@essex.gov.uk Telephone: 0333 013 9910
Julie Weddell, County Manager, Missing Education Child Employment Service julie.weddell@essex.gov.uk 0333 013 1089	