

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Policy Sign off

| | Reviewer | Approver | Date |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Reviewer / approver | Theresa Moses (Headteacher) | LAC | Spring 2022 |
| Next Review | | | Spring 2023 |

Related policies: Safeguarding

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Purpose

It is only by attending school regularly and punctually that pupils can take advantage of the educational opportunities that are available to them. Statistical evidence indicates that those children who do not attend school on a regular basis do not make the same level of progress as those children who do.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors– have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play.

Legislation Framework

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child). The policy has been drawn up based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations.

Procedures

All staff (teaching and support) have a responsibility to set a good example by their own attendance and punctuality. The Headteacher will oversee the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. They will ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team; are made regularly available to all staff, pupils and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance); and that the Local Academy Committee is fully aware of attendance data and targets.

The Headteacher will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

Recording Attendance

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff, are trained so that the registers are taken accurately.

The following codes are used in SIMs when marking a register:

| CODE | DESCRIPTION | MEANING |
|------|--|-------------------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | Approved Education Activity |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence |
| D | Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) | Approved Education Activity |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised absence |
| F | | |
| G | Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorised absence |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) | Authorised absence |
| J | Interview | Approved Education Activity |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised absence |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised absence |
| O | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description) | Unauthorised absence |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education Activity |
| R | Religious observance | Authorised absence |
| S | Study leave | Authorised absence |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised absence |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorised absence |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education Activity |
| X | Non-compulsory school age absence | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y | Enforced closure | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z | Pupil not yet on roll | Not counted in possible attendances |
| # | School closed to pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |
| | | |

- All registers are taken promptly at 8:45 am and at 12:45pm for Reception, 1:15 pm for years 1 and 2, 1:30 pm for years 3 and 4 and 1:45 for years 5 and 6

- Any pupil who arrives after the closing of the register will be marked as absent. This will be amended to late if the pupil arrives before 9am at school.
- Any pupil arriving late must be signed in by a parent and provide a reason why. The administrative staff then register these pupils as late. For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.
- A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Categorising Absence

After registers are closed any child who is not present will be marked as unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, the school will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school. If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised;

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- Where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend.
- Where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example to attend a funeral.
- A pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered.
- Where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible and to return their child to school immediately afterwards –or send him / her to school beforehand)
- Where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's / student's parents belong.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- No explanation has been given by the parent.
- The school is not satisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday.
- The pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission.
- Any sudden absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the class teacher and reported to the school office. The school office will advise the Headteacher.

Collecting Attendance Data

The Attendance Office and the EWO will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the Senior Leadership Team, parents and the Local Academy Committee. The report should include commentary on the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance.

Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE (via the Local Authority and SIMS) within the stipulated time frame.

Improving Attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Paxton Academy. Parents are regularly informed of their child/ren's attendance using the 'Traffic Light' system.



| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---|
| 100% | Platinum | Outstanding attendance |
| 97%-99% | Gold | Excellent attendance |
| 95%-96% | Green | Good attendance with room for improvement |
| 91%-94% | Amber | Cause for concern |
| 90% and below | Red | Persistent absence, significant cause for concern |

They are also informed in class and whole school newsletters about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment. Year group attendance is shared on a weekly basis via the school newsletter.

Pupils who achieve 100% attendance each term will attend a tea party with the Headteacher.

Absence is managed in the following ways:

- Paxton Academy has in place a system of first-day texting. This means that parents will receive a text on the first day if a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupil who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge.
- Parents need to contact the school each day a child is absent.
- Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 2 to 3-week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents (and pupils) to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit.
- If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), and if attendance falls to 90% or less the matter will be referred to the school's Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

A bi-weekly Attendance Panel meeting will be held with the Headteacher and EWO for any child who has attendance of less than 90%.

Children Missing from Education

If a child has been missing in education for 12 or more days, a child missing in education (CMIE) form will be completed and sent to the Local authority. (see safeguarding policy)

Holidays in Term Time

All applications will be considered individually. The school policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Individual bases

Paxton Academy will consider authorising holidays for:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- Parents who are subject to a strict and un-negotiable holiday rota and evidence are provided to this effect.
- Should holidays be taken in term time, this may lead to the parent/carer being fined.

Parents' / carers' responsibilities

It is expected that parents / carers will:

- Ensure their children attend the school regularly
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum

- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

Parents will also be expected to:

- Notify Paxton Academy on the first day of absence by reporting to the school office via telephone or email.
- Ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day.

Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher.