



MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of Policy: November 2016

Review date: November 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 Manor Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

1.2 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. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

1.3 The policy has been drawn up based on current Government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

2. School's roles and responsibilities

2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Manor Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

2.2 Attendance Leader

The Headteacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. As the Attendance Leader, the Headteacher 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 Governing Body 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.

2.3 Registration

i) 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. The admin staff complete the registers using the prescribed codes (shown below):

REGISTER CODES

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	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised leave of absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised leave of absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised leave of 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
W	Work experience	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

ii) The register will be called promptly at **8.55 am** and **1.15 pm** by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

iii) The registers will close at **9.05 am** and **1.25 pm**. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will be marked as **absent**. Any child arriving late but before the closing of the register will be marked as **late**.

2.4 Categorising absence

i) A mark will be made in respect of each child following the close of the registers. Any child who is not present will be marked 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.

ii) Manor Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Manor Primary 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**.

iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 2 weeks**, the absence will remain unauthorised;

iv) Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

(a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example -

· a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,

· 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,

(b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

(c) 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);

(d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions;

(e) 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;

(f) in other **exceptional circumstances** (eg a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.

v) **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 or parents are staying at home to mind the house;
- the pupil or parents are shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, eg a birthday; **family holiday**
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;
- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

2.5 Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

2.6 Absences after close of class registers

Any sudden absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the classteacher and reported to the school office. The school office will advise the Headteacher.

2.7 Staff Training

The School Attendance Leader will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. Collection and analysis of data

3.1 The Attendance Leader will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

3.2 Attendance is monitored by year group and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils / students with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

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

4. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

4.1 Attendance has a very high profile at Manor Primary School. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

4.2 Manor Primary School has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week. The school office will contact the families for an explanation of absence and refer to the Headteacher.

4.3 First-day calling

Manor Primary School has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned 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 pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence, the school will send a letter to them by first class post.

4.4 Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 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 pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit - usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

4.5 Referral to the Education Attendance Service - Fixed Penalty Notices

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence if a parent fails to secure their child's regular attendance at school at which they are registered, if that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty Notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under s444 Education Act 1996 or s36 Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate.

As a result, the Local Authority has responsibility for developing a local code of conduct that will govern how all of the partners named in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, will issue Penalty Notices.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
- Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence will be restricted to one notice/ warning per parent of a pupil per academic year.
- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence, (e.g. time off for holidays and birthdays that have been refused authorisation by the headteacher) can be used in an academic year.
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child.

- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if one of following criteria is met:

- There are at least 20 sessions (10 school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during the current and previous term. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- For unauthorised leave of absence, there must be a minimum of 2 sessions of unauthorised leave of absence (due to unauthorised leave in term or time being absent for longer than was agreed) within the total of 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence required prior to issuing the penalty notice. These unauthorised absences do not need to be consecutive and should be calculated from the previous rolling calendar year.
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed, in the current and previous term. Persistent means at least 20 sessions of late arrival which do not have to be consecutive. Register Closes at 9.05am (15 minutes after the start of the day).
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An 'Excluded child' is one that has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- A penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of children in the care of the LA with whom other interventions will be used.

4.6 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Attendance Service.

4.7 Pupils / students who arrive late for school but before the register closes must report to the school office and will be recorded in the "Late Book". They will then be marked as late.

4.8 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office. **It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.**

4.9 For the same reason it is important that parents of pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day inform the school office. The school office will record that the child has left the school site and will mark them back in when they return.

4.10 Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the pupil will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. Manor Primary School takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. If, however, a pupil appears to have left

the premises without authorisation, the school will try to make contact with his/her parents immediately.

5. Term-time Holidays

5.1 The head teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted

5.2 Manor Primary School will consider every application individually; it is policy NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays **is not a right**. An application must be made in writing using the appropriate form (see appendix), with appropriate evidence, **in advance** of the intended holiday.

5.3 Manor Primary School 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 is provided of this

5.4 Manor Primary School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence using the appropriate form (see appendix) giving the reasons for the decision.

5.5 Manor Primary School will NOT authorise a leave of absence during periods of national tests, ie SATS and phonics assessments.

6. Parents' / carers' responsibilities

6.1 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), who will be supported and encouraged by Manor Primary School.

6.2 Manor Primary School expects 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.

6.3 Parents will also be expected to:

- notify Manor Primary School on the first day of absence using the schools telephone line (01827 475200) or reporting to the school office.

- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives Manor Primary School will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

7. Pupils' responsibilities

7.1 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.

7.2 Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their class teacher a note from their parents to explain the absence. Pupils also have a responsibility for reporting to the school office if they arrive late.

8. Governors' responsibilities

8.1 The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Completed by Mr S Robson - November 2016

Signed _____

(Chair of Governing Body)

Date _____

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school by 8:50 a.m. but not before 8:40 a.m. to be ready to go into class at 8:50. The register is taken by 8.55. Afternoon school starts at 1:15 p.m.

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at 9.05 in the morning and 1.25 in the afternoon.

Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office.

A series of unauthorised late marks may lead to referral to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer).

3. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence. We will telephone you if your child has not arrived in school by 9:30 a.m. On return to school, a letter explaining the absence is expected. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

An accumulation of unauthorised absences will lead to a referral to the Educational Welfare Service.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment.

(Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)

- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Family holidays in exceptional circumstances (only when prior approval has been given)

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absences other than those in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays, day trips, shopping or birthdays are not classed as exceptional.

6. Can we take family holidays during term-time?

Family holidays should be taken during school holidays. Only in exceptional circumstances will permission be given. You need to request permission for your child to accompany you on a family holiday during term time. You should complete a pyramid leave of absence application form (see appendix) stating the reason why the holiday must be taken in term time. The Headteacher has the right to refuse permission.

7. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas trip to visit relatives. What should I do?

The school recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family, particularly for minority ethnic families. Contact your child's class teacher or form tutor as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit.

The school would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's SATs. You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Headteacher then approves the visit, the school will set work for your child to complete while away.

As far as possible we will ensure the work set reinforces the educational value of such a visit.

8. What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his / her education.

Leave of Absence Request

Full name of child(ren)

Address

Reason for application and dates

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s)

From Date:

To Date:

Office use only

Request seen by Head Teacher/Head of Year Y/N

Agreement reached Y/N Current Att %Other outcome Date / /

The head teacher will consider the following points before authorising leave

1. The child's previous attendance history.
2. The age of the child(ren).
3. The child's stage of education.
4. The time of year (exams).
5. The nature of the trip (an exceptional experience).
6. Holiday already taken/granted within current academic year.
7. Whether the parents are restricted in terms of leave from their employer.

Please return copy to parent with request form

Please help us and your child by ensuring their attendance remains above 96% allowing them to achieve their potential.

