

Milverton Primary School



Attendance Policy

Milverton Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each child to realise his/her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The aim of the Attendance Policy

At Milverton Primary School, through the implementation of this policy, we aim to achieve good attendance, by:

- creating a stimulating and exciting learning environment which fosters a desire in children not to want to miss a single day of their schooling;
- informing parents of their own legal responsibility and school policy;
- supporting teachers and school management in promoting and monitoring good attendance.

Absence from School

Only the school in the context of the law can approve absence, not parents. The fact that a parent has offered a note, phoned, or made personal contact in relation to a particular absence, does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept it.

School Procedures relating to Absence

- In the case of absence due to illness, medical or dental appointments a parent or carer must notify the school in person or by a telephone call before the beginning of the school day or by the production of a medical card.
- If a child is being taken from the school after registration then this must be recorded in the Signing Out Log, which is located in the school office. The child's re-entry after the appointment should also be recorded.
- The decision to phone parents to collect children when a child is feeling unwell is made by the Classteacher/Headteacher and will depend on individual cases.
- If a child is not present at registration and no explanation has been given then a phone call will be made home by the school office.
- The parent of any child who goes home to lunch and does not return to school after lunch should contact the school by the end of lunchtime giving the reason for absence.
- If the school has received no reason for a child's absence it will send a standard letter to the parents asking for a reason to be given. If no response is received the letter will be followed by a phone call before the absence is marked as unauthorised.

- Parents are asked not to return their children to school until they have **fully** recovered from the illness that has caused the absence.

Lateness

We actively discourage late arrival at school. A child arriving late seriously disrupts not only his or her own learning but also that of others. Exceptional circumstances occasionally arise and these should be discussed with the Headteacher.

- If a child arrives late after registers are closed, with no adequate explanation, they will be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- The school gates are closed by the Site Manager as soon after 8.55 a.m. as is possible and always by 9.10 a.m. at the latest. All children late after 9 a.m. are to use the front entrance and report to the school office immediately. Parents of children in the Infants must assume the responsibility for this.

Leave of Absence (including family holidays or special occasions)

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

- Headteachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Headteachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered individually taking into account circumstances such as:

- The nature of the event for which leave is being sought;
- The frequency of the request;
- Whether advance notice has been given;
- The pupils attainment, attendance and ability to catch up missed schooling

In supporting the Headteacher making decisions about authorising leave of absence for activities and holidays, and what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances' the governing body has agreed the following. Exceptional circumstances are:

- activities of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time;
- holidays that are a unique, never to be repeated occasion that can only be taken at the time requested;
- holidays that have to be taken during term time due to parents' work commitments (letter of confirmation from employer required);
- holidays that are taken in response to a trauma or bereavement in the family.

If a child's attendance over the previous 20 weeks is less than 95% or a period of leave near to or coinciding with SATs then authorisation is very unlikely to be granted.

Family Illness and Bereavement

The school has concern and sympathy for the family at such a time and will endeavour to use its discretion to authorise an agreed period of absence.

Long Term Absence

When the total length of absence from school is expected to exceed 4 weeks the Headteacher will refer to the Local Authority to seek support from the appropriate service.

If the child is able to work at home then the school will ensure that work is sent home for the child to complete.

Communicating Information

Through weekly newsletters and specific letters the Headteacher is responsible for informing parents of the school's policy and procedures on attendance.

The Inclusion Leader will communicate with parents when a child's absence during a term is causing a concern.

Monitoring of Absences

Absences are monitored termly by the Inclusion Leader and reported annually to the Governing Body.

When concerns are identified and school action has prompted no improvements they will be referred to the Attendance Compliance Enforcement Service's guidance. The initial trigger for intervention will be when a child's attendance falls below 90% over a term period.

Agreed by: _____ Performance and Standards Committee

Date Agreed: _____ Spring 2014 _____

Date to be reviewed: _____ Summer 2015 _____