



# Milverton Primary School

## Attendance Policy 2021

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.
- working closely with and supporting families to ensure any barriers to good attendance are overcome.

### **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. Parents should sign children back into school following the appointment.
- The decision to phone parents to collect children when a child is feeling unwell is made by the Class teacher / Head teacher 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 for 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.

## **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 attendance lead / Head teacher.

- If a child arrives 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 9.05 a.m. at the latest. All children arriving 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.
- Registers officially close at 9.25am (30 minutes after the morning bell).
- Parents should not be late to collect their children. Children will end their school day at 3.20pm and parents should be on the playground ready to collect them at this time. Parents of children who are walking home from should inform the school office in writing. (available to children from year 5 onwards)

## **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
- Attendance lead / Head teacher 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 attendance lead / Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. The application form is available on the school website.
- Attendance lead / Head teacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent or carer.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 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 attendance lead / Head teacher 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, religious (this may be discussed with a representative from the religious group) 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 Head teacher 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 Head teacher is responsible for informing parents of the school's policy and procedures on attendance.

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

Letters will be sent to families following an attendance report, and following a period of monitoring. Letters will follow a tiered approach and outline the academic, social and legal ramifications of poor attendance in school.

Attendance monitoring evidence and support plans will be passed to a child's new school when transferring to a new setting.

### **Monitoring of Absences**

The school will track and review the children in bottom 10% absenteeism for the school, unless their % attendance rate is 95% or above. We will review impact of absenteeism, reason for absenteeism and broad progress in school.

Absences are monitored regularly by the school and reported termly 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.

The school will follow:

#### **Autumn 1**

- Track families showing difficulties from previous year

#### **Autumn 2**

- Complete attendance monitoring report
- Send first round letters to families falling within criteria
- Meet with families who show ongoing attendance issues

#### **Spring 1**

- Review families under review
- Send out letters in regards Improvements / decline
- Meet with families showing decline

#### **Spring 2**

- Complete attendance monitoring report
- Send first round letters to families falling within criteria
- Meet with families who show ongoing attendance issues

#### **Summer 1**

- Review families under review
- Send out letters in regards Improvements / decline
- Meet with families showing decline

#### **Summer 2**

- Complete attendance monitoring report
- Send first round letters to families falling within criteria
- Meet with families who show ongoing attendance issues

At any stage where a family is having ongoing attendance concerns, the school will complete an attendance action plan to help support improvements in attendance. The school will also make an offer of early help to support families in need.

Agreed by: Performance and Standards Committee

Date Agreed: Issue 3: July 2021 (inc. wording adjustment)

Date to be reviewed: July 2023

Updated Issue 1: Autumn 2017

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day