



VICARAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

REVIEWED BY: Karen Dennett - Attendance/Early Help Lead
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Aims

Vicarage Primary school is committed to providing each pupil with a full and effective education. 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 in the school. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Policy objectives:

- To safeguard the welfare, social, educational and emotional development of children
- To reduce persistent absence
- To reduce or eliminate term time holidays/leave of absence
- To promote commitment to education and high achievement
- To maximise the potential of every individual pupil

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Absence from school can adversely impact on a child achieving positive outcomes; it can result in insufficient coverage of the national curriculum and pupils failing to achieve expected grades or realise their potential

- All school aged children have the right to a full-time education.
- Good attendance and punctuality are valuable life skills.
- We believe that all children have equal access to the curriculum.
- Parents have a legal responsibility for children's right to education.
- Schools have the responsibility to ensure that children have these rights.

The responsibilities of the Parents

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.

- Provide school with a reason for absence either by: Phone, text, email, in person at the school office or in writing (school diary entry or a note).
- Provide medical evidence of appointments or continued illness.
- Make arrangements for travel during allocated school holidays.

- Ensure children arrive at school in good time for the start of the school day.
- Notify school if children will be arriving late and inform school if their child will require a school meal.

The Law relating to attendance:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she 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 responsibilities of the school

At Vicarage we do all we can to enable our pupils to attend school every day, on time.

- Teachers are responsible for completing the computerised register at the beginning of each session. (see Appendix A)
- An accurate record is kept of all attendance, absence and lateness.
- If a child is absent and we have not been informed of the reason for absence parents will be contacted.
- The class teacher should seek reasons for absence and request letters from parents following an absence.
- Support parents and pupils who are identified as persistent absentees.
- Work in partnership with parents and pupils to raise attendance.
- School undertake to ensure attendance lead is up to date with current government and borough compliance regulations and adhere to safeguarding procedures.

The Law relating to safeguarding:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**.

- **Authorised** absence are mornings/afternoons away from school for a reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.
- **Unauthorised** absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been granted.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy
- absences which are not explained properly
- children who arrive at school after the close of registers
- shopping
- looking after siblings
- Holidays in term time will be recorded as unauthorised an absence penalty notice from the Local Authority may be issued.

Attendance management and monitoring

Recording Information:

Information must be recorded promptly and accurately. Office, attendance and teaching staff are responsible for recording reasons provided for absence. Late arrivals and children sent home during the school day will be recorded by the office staff.

Absence /medical notes:

Medical appointments and evidence will be kept in files in the office and maintained by the office team.

Notes received from parents explaining absence must be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns, that may require further investigation, then the notes will be retained for a longer period.

Teachers have responsibility for registration, making initial inquiries regarding a reason for absence and recording these in Sims.

School's attendance staff has responsibility for monitoring attendance and liaising with pupils, parents and staff to raise whole school attendance and that of individual pupils.

The staff with responsibility for attendance will:

- Send a text or phone the parents daily of children absent from school where no reason has been given for absence.
- Monitor below 95% attendance or recurring patterns of absence.
- Monitor and action Persistent absence below 90%
- Monitor Punctuality- parents are informed if children regularly arrive late. If this does not improve a letter is sent to parents.

Action and Intervention

Intervention or action will be dependant on each individual case and type of absence.

- Class teacher/ phase leader/attendance staff must speak to parent raising concern; this must be recorded on Sims and monitored for a period of six weeks, if there is no improvement - dependant on percentage attendance -
- A Letter will be sent to parent - recorded on Sims - copy in child's record file Or Phase leader / Attendance staff to meet with parents; this must be recorded on Sims and monitored for a period of six weeks, if there is no improvement -
- Invite to Parents Surgery- attended by School Attendance Team and Attendance Management Officer (AMO) to discuss concerns and agree time scale for improvement this must be recorded on Sims. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a referral to the Local Authority.
- Refer to attendance management officer (AMO) - copy for child's file - recorded on Sims - progress to Borough Attendance Panel Hearing BAPH will be determined by the AMO.

Ten Day's Absence and Children Missing Education.

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days must be reported to CME Officer - See appendix B CME flow chart for further information. Every effort will be made by school to locate the child, including a visit to the home. The school will include details of any action taken.

Frequent/Persistent Absence (PA)

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent(s)/carer(s). If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one, Early Help Team or Attendance Management Officer.

PA pupils and their parents may be subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

Consequences of Poor Attendance /Punctuality

For pupils whose attendance and/or punctuality fails to improve, after a range of interventions and support measures have been tried by the school, the ultimate consequences may be one of the following:

- 1) The school may ask the Council to issue a Penalty Notice on its behalf. A Penalty Notice carries a fine of £60, per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid within 20 days it rises to £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. If not paid at all, court action is likely to be initiated.
- 2) The school may ask the Council to initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, or even up to 3 months imprisonment.
- 3) In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and educational development of the child.

Leave during term time:

Leave during term time will not be authorised except in very exceptional circumstances. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. Parents must complete a form giving details of the expected period of absence and sign to confirm they have been given a warning regarding this leave see **appendix C**. School may ask for parents to provide evidence of flights if the leave is to be taken in another country.

Punctuality

Children are able to enter the school buildings from 8.45am. The start of the school day is 8.55am. Gates are locked at 9.00am by the Site Supervisor. Children arriving after this time should use the main gate leading to reception. A member of the Attendance team will then record the time and reason for lateness.

Morning registration

- This will take place at the start of the school day at 9.05am.
- The registers will remain open for 30 minutes.
- The class teacher should record any child arriving after 8.55am but before 9.05am as late (L) in Sims.
- Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded by Admin staff.

Afternoon Registration.

Reception, years 1, 2, 3 and 4

- The afternoon session starts at 1.00pm

Years 5 and 6

- The afternoon session starts at 1.25pm

Late after the close of register

(This is defined as any child arriving more than 30minutes after the start of either morning or afternoon registration).

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U code) unless there is an acceptable explanation. In cases where the absence at registration was for attending medical appointments, evidence of such will be required and the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes as present but will be coded as late before registers close. This will be recorded in a late book and on Sims with time of arrival and reason for the lateness.

This ensures that:

- They are registered for lunch.
- They are registered in case of an emergency.

Pupils who are continually late will be monitored. Parents of children that come to school unaccompanied will be informed. Letters will be sent if problem persists (Copy for child's file).

Parents Evening

The attendance staff provides class teachers with a list of children's attendance; class teacher will inform parents of child's current attendance if this is below 95% this conversation should be commented on Sims. Attendance staff are available throughout the week to mee- with parents.

Promoting Good Attendance

- Weekly Celebration for the class with the highest attendance - praise and recognition in assembly, marbles for their team. Displays around the school allow children to see how their class is doing.
- Termly reward - a treat awarded to class with highest attendance in each phase.
- Terms 2, 4 and 6 pupils achieving 100% attendance are awarded certificates and a prize in special celebration assemblies.

Absence types and Suggested interventions.

Random absences/ one day illness/often fail to complete a whole week.

Work closely with parent to establish trust investigate underlying issues.

Recurring or prolonged periods of absence due to illness.

Liaise with school nurse to ascertain medical issues.

Child refuses to go to school.

Support child with mentoring 1-1 or group work. Support parent / triple P or Early Help Record.

Late Collection Procedures

- Children not collected by 3.25pm need to be escorted by the class teacher to the designated area.
- The class teacher must record the child's full name on the late collection form together with the time they were left. Staff on late collection duty will wait with the child until a parent/carer arrives to collect them. The time the child has been collected must be recorded. A record of who collected the child must also be made.
- If a child has not been collected by 3.45pm and it has not been possible to contact the parent/carer the matter will be referred to a senior member of staff. They will then make the decision whether to contact social services or the police, if appropriate, and report the child as 'technically abandoned'. Parents will be contacted and told the whereabouts of their child.
- Late collections are closely monitored and a letter sent out to parents who have collected children late on 5 or more occasions. This must be recorded on sims.

Legal References

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that *the 'parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school, or otherwise.'*

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

The Children Act 1989 provides for a number of actions that can be taken to protect children's safety and welfare, on the premise that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Appendix A

Sims/computerised Registration guidance.

To Take Register

1. Login to SIMS .net.
 2. From your **Home Page** click the **Take Register** shortcut icon (looks like a clock)
 3. Double-click the session you wish to register
- The AM and PM sessions for your registration group should display. The system will automatically highlight the first child on the register and the session will be in green.

Complete the register using:

/ = present.

N = Absent (no reason provided for absence.)

L= late. Please keep your register open and give late marks until 9.05am after this time admin staff will change the code of any late arrivals.

By default the view of the register is **Today** but it is possible to quickly look back over the last 10 sessions **History** or forward to the next 10 **Future**, by selecting the relevant button at the top of the register. All marks are editable but you will need to unlock the **Padlock** icon

This is a convenient routine for entering reasons for absence that fall within this time period. Please remember that you can only view and edit the last 5 days. Please deal with absences daily. If you forget which code to use, click on **Codes** icon, for a full list of available codes. On all **Register** screens, hovering your mouse over a cell gives you a view of information associated with that mark, for example any comments or minutes late recorded. To enter a comment, click on the session the comment applies to then click on the **Comments** icon, a text box will appear. Once a comment has been entered the session will show a small red flag in the corner Please be mindful that if this is displayed on the large screen the children can also view these comments.

To access another teacher's register (PPA, SLA and Supply.)

1. You can search for the register of any colleague by clicking the **Binocular** icon
2. Enter the class teachers' name; you will get an option of am or pm session. Proceed as above from point 3

Trips

Mark any child who is present in the morning /, as you would normally do. Then go into your pm register and mark any child going on the trip with a **V**.

You should then print your register, indicate on sims and also on the printed register any child in school - but not going on the trip by putting the class they will be spending the day in next to their name.

This should then be attached to your risk assessment.

On your dinner reg. mark the children going on trip as **Absent**.

**Newham Attendance Management Service
CME FLOW CHART
Safeguarding Procedures**

Days 1-5
Child was allocated a place but did not arrive, no contact from family

Days 1-5
Child on roll ceases to attend, no reason or notification given

Days 6-10 School Checks

- Phone calls/letters
- Enquiries with friends, relatives, neighbours
- Home visits

If no contact, and family appear not to be there, complete CME Form and send **via USO FX** for attn: Thelma St Rose-Johnson, CME Officer

CME notified by other agency or individual
Application for school place arranged by CME team via Pupil

If, via other agency or individual referral we learn that

- No school has been applied for, or
- Parents decline the allocated school place,
- Parents on waiting list/EHE /EHE unsuitable

Days 11- 20 LA Checks

- Childview
- Carefirst
- Housing/Notify System
- Council Tax & Benefits
- Other Local Authorities Schools/CME/EWS contacts
- S2S DfE secure access system
- UK Border Agency
- Health

LA feeds back results of enquiries to referrer

LA identifies a school
LA issues School Attendance Order
LA monitors until child attending

Day 21
Child located out of borough, or left UK
School offrolls and notifies vacancy

Day 21
Child enrolled at another school in Newham
School offrolls and notifies vacancy

Day 21
Child located and likely to return to school
School keeps on roll

Day 21
Child vulnerable, checks still in process, CME Notify Social Care/Police
Keep on roll

Day 21
Child cannot be traced but there are no known risk factors.
Posted missing on lost pupils' database (s2s)
School off rolls and notifies vacancy

Appendix C

Date.....

Child.....Class.....

You have informed us that your child will be absent from school from
..... and will return on

as term time leave is not approved this leave will be **unauthorised**.

I would ask that you carefully consider the consequences of your child missing school
which will undoubtedly have an effect on their learning and future achievements.

Please note that unauthorised leave may result in your child losing their school place and
a penalty notice. Please see attached Warning Letter.

Please check the details, sign and return the tear off slip at the bottom of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Khan
Head Teacher.

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For the attention of : Attendance Team

My child.....in class.....will be absent
fromand will return on

- I understand this leave will be unauthorised.
- I have received a warning letter regarding a penalty notice.
- Prolonged unauthorised leave may result in my child losing their school place.

Signed..... Parent/Carer Date

Warning of Penalty Notice

Date:.....

Dear Parent

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Pupils name.....

Registered pupil at Vicarage Primary School

This is a formal warning that you are at risk of being in breach of the above Regulations. The reason for this warning letter is detailed on the attached sheet. The reason indicated empowers the Local Authority to issue you and any other parent/carer of your child, with a Penalty Notice.

The Penalty Notice would require you to pay a fine of £60 within 21 days. If this fine were not paid within the time limit, the penalty would rise to £120 which must be paid within 28 days.

If you are issued with a Penalty Notice this enables you to discharge your potential liability for an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, of failure to secure your child's regular attendance at school. If you do not pay the fine you will be liable to prosecution for this offence.

If you wish to discuss the matter further please contact me within 5 working days. If you wish to make representations to the Council you should write to Mrs R Cooper, Attendance Manager, 1000 Dockside, 3rd Floor, East Wing. London Borough Of Newham, E16 2QU.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Khan
Head Teacher