



Parwich Primary School

Attendance Policy

Review every year

Introduction

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education, in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Parents/carers have the legal responsibility to ensure their child receives a full time education suitable to their age, ability and any special educational needs. Failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

At Parwich Primary School, we seek to encourage good attendance by providing a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment, where we hope children will feel safe and happy.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents. We recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium can have on improving pupil attendance.

Why Attendance Matters

At Parwich Primary School, we expect pupil's attendance to be at least 95%.

Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well at school and will set them up with good routines for later life and the working world, as well as giving them invaluable opportunities:

- to make new friends and feel included;
- to learn new things and develop skills;
- to increase their confidence and self-esteem;
- to improve social skills;
- to achieve their potential and fulfil aspirations.

Every school day counts. Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

Attendance, Absence and Days of Learning Missed

Attendance	Absence and days of learning missed
100% attendance	No days missed; no learning missed
95% attendance	9 days of absence, 1 week and 4 days of learning missed
90% attendance	19 days of absence, 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed
85% attendance	28 days of absence, 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

Your legal responsibility as a parent or carer is to ensure that your child or children of school age receive a suitable full-time education.

Once enrolled at a school, it remains the parent or carer's legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly and arrives on time each day.

Parents and carers are encouraged to maintain good attendance by providing the following support:

- make sure you and your child understand the importance of school attendance and punctuality and know what the school rules are;
- talk to the school to discuss what support is available, if your child has any issues which could affect attendance levels;
- avoid making appointments during the school day, and if this is unavoidable, provide evidence (where possible) that an appointment was attended - this will enable the school to authorise the absence;
- do not take holidays during school term-time.

Who is a Parent?

In this policy, the following are definitions of a parent:

- any natural parent, whether married or not;
- any parent who, although they are not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person - having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

School Responsibilities

Parwich Primary School adheres to all of its responsibilities:

- taking a register twice each day;
- using the appropriate National Attendance Codes;
- complying with statutory registration and deletion procedures;
- where there are concerns about pupil absence, Parwich seeks to intervene early and maintain a chronology of all contact (successful and attempted) regarding pupil absence, with the pupil, parents and other agencies. Schools will be required to produce this as evidence, if legal intervention is later used.

Definition of Authorised Absence

This is any absence that is approved by the Headteacher. These absences will be marked in the register with an authorised absence code.

Definition of Unauthorised Absence

An unauthorised absence is any absence that is not approved by the Headteacher:

- An absence for which a parent has not provided a reason;
- An absence where the reason provided has not been accepted as justifiable or genuine by the Headteacher;
- If your child arrives late after the close of register.

Registration

At Parwich Primary School, we have high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

The school day starts at 8:45am and pupils are expected to be in their classroom ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, we ensure a school member of staff is on 'Meet and Greet' from 8:35am to welcome pupils into school.

Morning registers are called at the start of each morning (8.45am) and close at 8:50am.

Afternoon registers are called at the start of each afternoon (1.00pm) and close at 1:05pm.

Lateness

Children who are persistently late after the close of register soon fall behind with their learning.

Pupils arriving before 9:15am, but after registration closes (8:50am) will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the register for each pupil (Attendance code L).

If your child arrives after 9:15am, they will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds. Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers whose children persistently arrive after this time.

If your child is late, after 9:15am, due to attending a doctor or dentist's appointment, the absence will be recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M); Written proof of appointments may be requested.

The school will seek to establish reasons for persistent late-coming and will follow DDC guidance, as appropriate. Penalty Notices can be issued, if a child persistently arrives late after the close of register (see Escalation Process).

Notification of Absence

If a pupil is absent, parents/carers will be expected to contact the school either verbally or in writing to discuss the reason by 9.15am. If there is no contact from the parents/carers, the school will contact the parents/carers regarding the child's absence.

The school will always follow up absences:

- to ascertain the reason for the absence;
- to ensure safeguarding action is being taken;
- to identify whether the absence is authorised or not;
- to identify the correct code to use in the register.

The school will seek to establish reasons for absence and will follow DDC guidance, as appropriate. Penalty Notices can be issued, if a child has unauthorised absence from school and their parent fails to improve the situation (see Escalation Process).

Leave of Absence in Term Time (including holidays)

In September 2013, the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers must not give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests for term time leave should be made on an 'Application by Parent/s for a Child's Leave of Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances' available from the school office/school website and

handed in two weeks before the first date of the requested absence whenever possible. You must have received written authorisation, before your child can be absent from school.

Parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken, which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur, or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. Absence deemed for the reason of unauthorised leave in term time will be marked in the register with the Attendance code G.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken, which is not authorised. If unpaid, this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996 (see Escalation Process).

Penalty Notices

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced legislation for local authorities to issue a Penalty Notice fine to the parent of a child who has unauthorised absences from school.

Penalty Notices can be issued for the following reasons:

- If leave is taken without the permission of the Headteacher;
- If a child has unauthorised absence from school and their parent fails to improve the situation;
- If a child persistently arrives late after the close of register;
- If a child, who has been excluded, is seen in a public place during school hours without adult supervision.

Escalation Process

In line with the new Government guidance Derbyshire County Council's new code of conduct states that the Local Authority will not issue more than two penalty notices within a 3 year period; consequently, a third request will automatically result in consideration of a straight to court prosecution.

More Information

For more information visit: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/attendance-missing-home-education/school-attendance/school-attendance.aspx>