



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy Statement:

It is the policy of Priory Community School an Academy Trust that all students attend lessons. High standards of attendance are central to the school's objective in aiming for excellence in all aspects of school life. Strong and effective management, working in partnership with parents, is essential to the establishment and maintenance of acceptable standards of attendance.

Aims:

- to maximise attendance rates to achieve a level of at least 97% attendance
- to reduce the number of persistent non attendees (students with less than 85% attendance)
- to acquaint parents with their responsibility for ensuring regular attendance
- to set the culture that unjustified absence will not be tolerated
- to support parents in ensuring that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn
- to maintain attendance registers as required by law

Attendance Procedures

Teachers: Within 10 minutes

- At the start of every lesson a register will be taken and the data recorded onto SIMs
- Anyone absent when the register is called should be marked with an **N** unless a code has already been placed on the register, in this case it should not be changed. If the student is displayed as being present earlier in the school day but absent for the teachers lesson, it is the teachers responsibility to alert the attendance team immediately. The attendance team, will alongside LT try to locate the student and contact parents
- If a student arrives late the mark can be changed on the system or a message sent to student services for the mark to be amended
- Lateness to class should be supported with a note

Tutors:

- Accurately mark the register during tutor time

- Keep students updated weekly re their attendance level
- Offer support and guidance as part of the IAG process for those students whose attendance levels are below the target of at least 97%
- Update tutor attendance figures on a weekly basis

Attendance Manager

- Initiates a truancy call on the first day for any student absent and for whom an explanation has not been received from a parent
- Ensures all registers are taken on a lesson by lesson basis and that accurate data is inputted onto the system
- Follows up any missing marks with staff and students
- Keeps parents informed of absences
- Oversees application for holidays during term time
- Produces reports for attendance reviews
- Liaises with outside agencies when attendance continues to be very poor

Head of Years:

- Work closely with the attendance officer to monitor student attendance
- Communicate to parents concerns re poor attendance
- Coordinates with EAO and attendance manager attendance clinics
- Ensures tutor displays are update weekly and that students know their attendance levels

Intervention:

Individual student's, whose attendance is below 95%, will be discussed at a weekly attendance meeting. Relevant intervention will be agreed in accordance with the following guidelines:

- When attendance drops below 92% the Family Liaison Officer Education Attendance Officer will contact the family to explain expectations and to offer support and advice.
- Students will be expected to attend period 6 catch up sessions
- For persistent lateness a detention will be issued
- When attendance is below 90% an initial attendance meeting may be convened at which parents will be informed that all future absences must be accompanied by medical evidence
- If attendance falls to below 85% the EAO will work with the family to improve attendance figures and a fixed penalty warning will be issued if there is no improvement.
- At 80% a fixed penalty warning will be issued which may result in a fine and/or a formal attendance meeting may be called which may result in prosecution.

First day contact

First day contact is an integral part of the whole school Attendance Policy. Parents/carers and students must realise that a student's absence will be noted and acted upon swiftly. This will make students more reluctant to absent themselves. First day contact sends a clear message to students and parents that attendance is very important.

For the schools policy of first day contact to work efficiently:

- Parents/carers should inform the school of the reason for an absence the first morning a student is away. Parents/carers will need to be aware of what is expected of them and challenged if they fail to inform the school of the reasons for absence, or if the reasons given for the absence are unacceptable.
- The telephone is the preferred method of contact as letters arrive too late and can be intercepted. Letters do not demand an instant response and quickly lose their effect.
- If the parent/carer has not contacted the school by 10.30 am, then the parents of identified students should expect to be contacted by a member of the attendance team.
- Any student absent for 3 or more days, whether or not the school has been informed of the reason for absence, may receive a home visit from the Education Attendance Officer.
- The child should bring in a note when they return to school.

This procedure will be most effective if it is applied to every unauthorised absence and gives a clear message that absences are not allowed for reasons other than those determined by the law. The procedure and the need for it should be understood by all and the school will do this by regularly writing to parents/carers

It is the view of the school that first day contact works by:

- Raising awareness of the importance of full attendance
- Addressing problems before they become serious
- Improving home-school liaison
- Sending a clear message to parents and students that if a child is absent they will be missed
- Alerting parents/carers who may be unaware that their child is truanting and therefore may be at risk
- Requiring and promoting a high level of communication within the school; staff working as a team
- Reducing the number of students who have short-term absence, thereby reducing the overall absence rate

Lateness

There are two negative results caused by students who constantly arrive late. These are:

- The loss of learning suffered by the student themselves which over a year can add up to a significant proportion of their time in school

- The disruption to other children in their class as the teacher's attention is taken from the task at hand.
- Can raise levels of unauthorised absence

The strategies that the school will use to tackle lateness will include:

- Informing parents/carers when a student is regularly late
- Staff on gates until 9.00am
- Detentions for students who are late three times in a term with the potential for instant detention for those arriving more than 40 minutes late without good reason.
- Use of penalty notices
- Saturday detentions arranged for persistent lateness

Holiday in Term Time and extended leave

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (Principal) of a school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the Principal considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be **unauthorised** and will lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine).

Exceptional circumstances

Are defined as:

Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting

Exceptional significant family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis with you.

The head of School will consider every above request individually but the **following will not meet the criteria:**

Relatives coming to visit

Cheaper holidays in England and abroad

Family day trips

Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays and may include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

Authorised officers have the discretion to issue a penalty notice without warning where the parent has chosen to take the child on leave during term time without authorisation, or evidence is subsequently found to suggest a child was away from school with the knowledge of the parents/carers.

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Policy Review:

The wording of this policy will be reviewed by the Academy Council Support and Conduct Committee biannually. As well as examining the specific review data, the policy statement will be checked for continuing relevance against any changed statutory requirements and LEA advice.

Review Data:

At the review the following data will be examined

- Authorised and unauthorised absences
- Number of holidays taken in term time
- Persistent non-attendance data

Date Policy Approved – November 2016

The name of the designated person is: Assistant Principal – Pastoral Team

The Policy is to be reviewed every 2 years and the next review is due in November 2018