



Curiosity Compassion Courage

Partney Church of England School

Our small school community welcomes everyone and aspires to meet the needs of all through high expectations, Christian values and compassionate support. We create a firm foundation for all to fulfil their potential as future citizens of the world. Our challenging and exciting learning environment enables everyone to go forward as champions of compassion, curiosity and courage.

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Mission Statement

Partney CE Aided School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. Absence from school for any reason can have a negative impact on a child's educational progress. To this end the School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems which may impede full attendance are acted upon as quickly as possible.

2. Aims

It is recognised that all pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations. Foundation stage children below statutory school age are entitled to education in accordance with Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- No pupils should be deprived of their opportunities by either their own non-attendance or that of other pupils from receiving an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported and recognised at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations may exist beyond the control of pupils and/or parents which schools need to address in partnership with external agencies.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer groups and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher/ head of school to account for the implementation of this policy

We have a governor with responsibility for monitoring school attendance: Jo Lennon

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3.2 The headteacher/ head of school

The headteacher/ head of school is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs R Osgodby and can be contacted via the school telephone number: 01790 753319.

3.4 Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office twice a day: 8:50am and 1:10pm

3.5 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the headteacher/ head of school/ parent & pastoral support in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

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4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, in the morning and afternoon. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or no
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:10pm and will be kept open until 1:20pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 7). Absence can be notified via telephone, selecting the dedicated absence line.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents must contact the school office to request a 'Leave of Absence' form. This must be completed and returned to the school for agreement prior to the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code



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School admin staff will record the number of minutes late the child arrived. Lateness will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Where an ongoing punctuality issue is identified, parents will be contacted in writing to outline the concern and seek improvement.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- In the first instance, send an absence text to pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- If there is no response to the text by 10:00am, call the pupil's parent/ carer. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, they may make a home visit or ask the Police to make a safe and well check. If there is no one present at the house, school may alert the police. Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an appropriate agency e.g. education welfare office, child missing education team, etc.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents/ carers will be informed, in writing, of their child's attendance at the end of each term, particularly where attendance either falls below the expected standard or is exceptional. General attendance data will be reported half termly via the school newsletter. Where a child's attendance is of greater concern, contact will be made immediately via telephone. Annual attendance information will be reported on each child's report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher/ head of school will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's/ head of school's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

What amounts to "exceptional circumstances" is a matter for the discretion of the Head Teacher/ head of school and should be judged on a case by case basis but it is unlikely to amount to an exceptional circumstance if it is merely claimed that a holiday abroad can only be afforded in term time or that a parent is unable to take leave during school holidays (this is a matter between the parent and their employer).

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least three weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher/ head of school may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)



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- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- To attend a significant family event, for example, a wedding or funeral.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Attendance monitoring

6.1 Monitoring attendance

Partney C of E Primary School will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children or individuals whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

6.2 Analysing attendance

Partney C of E Primary School will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

Partney C of E Primary School will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Analyse data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies



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- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.

- Initially write to parents to raise concerns re persistent absence. Where absence is severe, parents will be contacted via telephone.
- Where there is no improvement, regular meetings will be held with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
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7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs R Osgodby (headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy

November 2023

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Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

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M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day