



# Kington St Michael CE Primary School

## Attendance Policy

If our pupils are to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them, good attendance and punctuality are essential.

### **AIM**

To maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality throughout the school

This will be achieved by:

- Maintaining procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality
- Rewarding good attendance
- Maintaining clear registration systems for class teachers
- Ensuring clear procedures to distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence and late registration
- Ensuring effective referral systems when a problem is identified, involving external agencies where necessary.

Staff, governors, pupils, parents and the Education Welfare Officer will work together to implement this policy.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Our pupils have the right to an education. Regular attendance and punctuality at school are essential:

- if pupils are to make good progress in their work
- if pupils are to develop to their full potential
- if pupils are to develop the discipline in school to prepare them for adult life.

The effects of missed schooling will often be:

- learning affected and potential not reached
- disrupted work
- difficulties forming relationships and settling into groups

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS**

- To ensure their children attend school regularly. This is a parent's legal responsibility.
- As far as possible to arrange medical appointments outside school hours.
- To avoid family holidays and visits during term time.
- To discourage absence for minor ailments.
- To discuss any issues preventing the child from attending school with the class teacher or headteacher, rather than keeping their child at home.
- To help promote good attendance and punctuality.
- To follow school procedures for reporting absence, including telephoning the school office on the first morning of illness.
- To ensure their child arrives at school on time.
- To ensure that their child is signed in at the school office if they arrive late.
- To ensure that their child is signed out at the school office if leaving school early.
- To ensure that their child is signed in and out at the school office when leaving and returning from appointments.

If their child is unavoidably absent from school, parents should:-

- Contact the school - telephone on the first morning of absence.
- Apply to the headteacher, in advance, for permission for leave of absence (eg. appointments, family holiday and extended trips).
- Be aware that any unexplained absences are recorded as unauthorised and are recorded on school reports.
- Be aware that time off school for visits to relatives, shopping or long weekends will not be authorised and if taken will be recorded on their school record.
- Be aware that if a child arrives at school after 9.20am this will be recorded as an absence.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL

### For Class Teachers

- To take register promptly and accurately in the morning and afternoon.
- To take any opportunity to request a reason for absence from the parents, when reasons are not provided.
- To note reasons for absence (if told by parent) and record in the register.
- To discuss any concerns with the school's administration officer, who will if necessary, notify the Educational Welfare Officer if appropriate.
- To encourage pupils who are trying to improve their attendance.
- To notify parents promptly of any concerns regarding attendance.

### For the School Office

- To provide all parents with a copy of the school's Attendance Booklet.
- To attempt contact with parents on the first day of any unexplained absence to establish the reason (by 10am if no message received from parents).
- To note reasons for absence with the correct letter in register and record whether it is authorised or unauthorised.
- To monitor attendance and alert staff of any concerns.
- To produce certificates for those pupils who have 100% attendance.

### For the Headteacher

- To ensure registers are accurate and apply the standard recommended coding by Wiltshire LA, which is in accordance with DfES guidelines for reasons of absence.
- To keep a record of each academic year's register for the following three years.
- To meet with the school's EWO to discuss pupils with difficulties with school attendance.

### For School Governors

- To review and update the Attendance Policy.
- To monitor attendance figures.

## THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL WELFARE OFFICER IN THE SCHOOL

The Educational Welfare Service is available to provide specific services to encourage good School attendance and allow pupils to benefit fully from the educational facilities available to them.

- Regular monitoring of registers.
- Regular meetings with the school to discuss and advise on problems related to attendance.
- To agree on action to be taken by the school and/or the Education Welfare Service.
- To liaise and make referrals with other agencies as appropriate.
- Feedback and exchange information in relation to work that has been undertaken by the Education Welfare Officer and/or the school.
- Under certain circumstances it may be necessary for legal action to be taken for non-school attendance.

## SCHOOL RESPONSES TO ABSENCES

The law requires all schools to indicate in the register whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

If a child is expected at school but does not arrive, attempts will be made to contact the parent on the first morning of absence.

### Authorised Absence

Authorised absence means that the Headteacher has either given approval beforehand for the pupil to be away, or that the explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification.

After an absence, even if the school receives a note, telephone call or personal contact about an absence, it is not obliged to accept that as a valid reason for absence. Only the Headteacher, within the context of the law, can authorise absence, not the parents. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the explanation or receives no explanation at all, the absence has to be treated as unauthorised.

Accurate use of register codes within the school will allow the teachers and Educational Welfare Officer to determine quickly the basis of the authorised absence in question.

Annual Family Holiday - there is a discretionary power for leave to be granted in exceptional circumstances of up to 10 days for a family holiday during term time in accordance with arrangements made by the Governors of the School. Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave granted exceed two weeks in any year. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right.

### Unauthorised Absence

The School is not able to authorise absences for repeated long weekends, shopping etc. and these will be recorded as unauthorised absences.

When no satisfactory explanation is received or the pupil has truanted, an unauthorised absence is recorded.

All unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy by the Government and will be entered on pupil's individual school reports.

### Procedures

- a) The admin officer will monitor attendance producing termly reports to the Headteacher. Where attendance falls below 80% the Headteacher will inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), and where attendance falls below 70% the responsibility for action will be passed to the EWO.
- b) Staff will be alert to critical times such as a return after a long period of sickness or a traumatic event, and will ensure that the child is supported appropriately.
- c) Following a period of extended absence staff will show flexibility in reintegrating the child into the school community. This reintegration may be on a phased basis, and arrangements will be made in consultation with parents and other professions as appropriate.
- d) The school will provide proactive strategies for working with individual pupils or groups of years to promote good attendance. In cases of poor attendance the Headteacher or EWO will set improvement targets in consultation with the parents.

## **SCHOOL ROLL**

The law requires the school to keep an admission register that acts as the School Roll.

The admission roll should contain details of the pupil from the day that they are admitted to the school (Education Regulations 1995).

Pupils should only be removed from the school roll in accordance with the Education Regulations 1995.

Copies of each year register must be kept for three years.

Please see the school's Attendance Booklet.

Policy Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Absence Codes

### **Present**

- / - Present on time
- L - late but in within 30 minutes of time due
- B - Educated off site (NOT Marlborough House, see V)
- P - Approved sporting activity
- V - Educational visit, inc. Marlborough House, school trips.  
Can also be used for extended absence due to illness (eg. broken leg) if a comprehensive programme of work is provided and marked.

### **Authorised Absence - authorised by teacher - NOT PARENT!**

- E - Excluded
- H - Holiday - up to 10 days at Headteacher's discretion. Over this would be coded differently - probably as unauthorised absence
- M - Medical / dental / illness
- R - Religious observance
- T - Traveller absence
- C - other authorised circumstances - to be used sparingly for rare occasions or agreed special occasions where no other code is applicable (eg. bereavement, marriage).

### **Unauthorised Absence**

- @ - Late by more than 30 minutes and where this is part of a pattern of lateness
- I - Unauthorised absence where there are known to be other agencies involved, (eg. pupil absent due to issues beyond a school/family control/ significant multi-agency involvement, whereabouts unknown).
- O - Unauthorised circumstances
- N - No reason given

### **Attendance not required**

- # - Holiday for all
- \* - Not on roll
- X - Only staff should attend (TD Days)
- Y - Enforced closure (eg. heating breakdown)
- Z - Not part of the school year (summer holiday period)
- ! - Attendance not required (eg. Polling day)

# Kington St Michael CE Primary School

## REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO BE ABSENT IN TERM TIME (other than holiday)

Dear Parents,

All parents will understand that regular attendance at school is necessary for children to make good progress with their education. Therefore we hope that appointments will be made after school ends. However, we appreciate that this may not always be possible and other circumstances may arise.

Child's name ..... Class .....

I am requesting that my child be absent from school from ..... to.....

Please give the full reason for asking for leave of absence in term time.

.....  
.....

Signed ..... (Parent/Guardian)

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## RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR LEAVE

I am writing to inform you that you have been granted permission for your child ..... to be absent from school from ..... to .....

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

# Kington St Michael CE Primary School

## REQUEST FOR LEAVE TO BE ABSENT ON HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME

All parents will understand that regular attendance at school is necessary for children to make good progress with their education. Taking your child out of school during term time may harm your child's academic progress. Therefore we hope that family holidays will be arranged during school holiday periods.

Schools may agree up to 10 days holiday absence in special circumstances with consideration being given to pupil's attendance, attainment and public examinations. Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Please read the Local Authority leaflet which explains Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised holidays during term time (available at the office and the main entrance).

Child's name ..... Class .....

I am requesting that my child be absent from school from ..... to.....

The number of school days missed will be .....

Please give the full reason for asking for leave of absence in term time.

.....  
.....

Signed ..... (Parent/Guardian) Date .....

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## RESPONSE TO HOLIDAY REQUEST

I am writing to inform you that you have been granted permission for your Child, ..... to be absent from school from ..... to ..... The maximum taken should be 10 days in any one academic year, which starts in September and ends in July. Your child will now have had ..... days. If over the allotted 10 days, any future request in the same academic year cannot be considered. This policy is in accordance with Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact the school office or alternatively the Education Welfare Service on 01249 659223.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

% attendance: