



MANOR INFANT SCHOOL

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CHAIR OF GOVERNORS & HEADTEACHER TO COMPLETE
Review Approved (signature):
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Policy for Attendance

'Valued as Individuals, Inspired as Learners'

Rationale

At Manor Infant School we believe that pupils need to attend school regularly and punctually if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them and make all round progress in learning and personal and social development.

Attendance at school is a statutory requirement and parents and carers are obliged under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, to ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless illness or other authorised absence prevents it.

The Department for Education sets the national expectation for primary schools to reach at least 95% attendance across the year. Each school also has an individual target set. The target for Manor Infant School and Nursery is 96%.

We recognise that from time to time some pupils and their families may experience problems, which could lead to lateness or absence. However, we aim to actively encourage punctuality and attendance by:

- Discouraging lateness
- Expecting an application from parents/guardians for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
- Being alert to emerging patterns of absence
- Promoting regular attendance, involving the School Attendance Team when necessary
- Supporting parents and carers

Aim

To promote good attendance at Manor, we aim to provide an education that brings out the best in every child, builds on their strengths and enables them to be successful learners, responsible citizens and happy, confident individuals. We encourage and support the involvement of each child in their own learning and aim that school provides an interesting, stimulating and motivating environment whereby all pupils can apply skills across the curriculum.

The school fully supports Portsmouth City Council with its 'Miss School, Miss Out' campaign to combat poor school attendance.

Registration Procedure

- The Register is called and attendance data is marked on the School Information Management System (SIMS) register.
- Absences must be coded according to the given codes.
- Gates are unlocked at 8.35 and the doors are opened at 8.40. The children should be in class no later than 9:00.
- **Any child arriving at school after 9:00 will be marked as late.**
- Registers will close at 9:15 am. Children who arrive after the register has been closed will be marked late after register (unauthorised absence). Registers are taken at 1:00pm and the school day finishes at 3:10pm.
- All telephone messages or messages in person regarding absence/lateness are to be recorded on (SIMS).
- All absence notes/ medical evidence from parents/guardians must be **kept** in the 'medical file'.
- Registers will be retained for 5 years.

N.B. Registers are Legal Documents and may be used in evidence in cases where parents/carers are being prosecuted for attendance offences.

Procedures for Following Up Absence

- If any child has not been registered or the school has not been notified about a child's absence, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent on the first day directly by telephone ~~or by text~~.
- If absent for a second day without notification the office will directly telephone the parent/carers.
- If the parent or carer notifies the school of a child's reason for absence, but the child continues to be absent for more than 3 days then an update check will be made by the school and medical evidence will be requested to support these sessions. If no medical evidence is received, the Headteacher has the authority to unauthorise these sessions.
- If a pupil returns to school with no explanation of their absence, a letter requesting a reason for absence will be sent by the Attendance Officer. If no reply, the sessions will be unauthorised. (Class teachers should enquire on return as to why child was absent.)
- Attendance Officer to follow up as needed and liaise with the Headteacher as well as informing the class teacher. (A note will be put on the class register if a child is off for more than 3 days).

The School's Role in Pupil's Absence

Issues regarding attendance

- The initial follow-up on punctuality and absenteeism rests with the Class teacher. It is the teacher who calls the register, learns the friendship patterns within the class and is most aware of family dynamics and potential problems.
- If the Attendance Officer notices that a child is absent regularly this is brought to the teacher's attention and a print out of attendance is shared.

Levels of Concern

- If a child has continuous or regular absence, such as a particular day of the week, parents or carers are invited in to discuss any attendance issues they have with the Head teacher, whilst being reminded of their statutory responsibility (unless medical evidence has been provided). Establishing good links and a working partnership with parents and carers is an important prerequisite for achieving good levels of attendance.
- The school will not authorise illness over 5 days unless satisfactory information has been shared with the school e.g. telephone call, proof of medication or photocopy of appointment card.
- The current persistent absence threshold is 90%. Once a child becomes a persistent absentee, the school will issue a Medical 1 letter and refer the absence to the School Nurse
- **Medical 1 letter:** If poor levels of attendance continue, the medical 1 letter will be issued. If the absences are related to medical issues the parents will be then required to provide evidence of each absence. The

evidence can be doctor or hospital appointment cards. **Medical 1 letters will be sent to the parents or carers of the child.**

- **Medical 2 letter:** If absences continue and evidence is not provided these sessions will be unauthorised and the parents will be informed that they will be referred to the Local Authority School Attendance Team. The school may submit a request for a School Attendance panel meeting to be held. Further details can be obtained from the Portsmouth City Council website under the section 'school attendance and home educating'.
- If a child has more than 5 days unauthorised absence in a term, then the matter may be referred to the School Attendance Team for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

Issues regarding punctuality

- Children arriving at school after 9:00 a.m. when the registers are called, will be marked late and parents will be requested to sign in their child on the electronic system indicating why their child is late. This is for safe guarding and a record that the child is in school.
- Punctuality will be monitored by the Attendance Officer and Headteacher. Procedures will be the same as the above for attendance.

Promoting Attendance

- Our aim is to encourage parents/~~guardians~~ and carers via their children to regularly attend school.
- To promote attendance, the class with the best weekly attendance will be presented with the 'Attendance Cup' at the Celebration of Learning assembly and Building Learning Power assembly.
- At the discretion of the Headteacher a child may be removed from a class's attendance figures i.e. for long term illness but not overall figures reported to the Department for Education.
- Other incentives are used to encourage attendance, such as stickers, certificates and rewards.
 - A mini trophy for 100% attendance for the whole year
 - Sam the Shark awarded to the class with the best attendance for the half term
- At the end of each term, any child who has 100% attendance for that term will receive a certificate and their parents will be invited to the assembly.
 - A letter will be sent thanking the parent for their support
 - A 100% attendance pencil
 - A 100% attendance wrist band
- In April, if a child has achieved 100% during the school year they will be able to take home 'Sam the Shark' and record in a scrapbook about their time with the tiger shark.
- There will also be regular updates to parents and carers on newsletters and the school's Facebook page.

Leave of Absence

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Manor Infant School agrees to follow the law, in such that the provision for the Headteacher to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

Sickness "I", medical appointments "M", religious holidays "R", the death or terminal illness of a person close to the family, attending a funeral of a person close to the family, service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad, recommendation by a health professional are all examples of exceptional circumstances of authorised absence, except in cases of persistent absence. Evidence would be required in each case.

If the request meets the exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first month of a new academic year

- Transition days
- Year 1 phonics screening week
- Year 2 SATs time

If a child has more than 5 days unauthorised absence in a term then the matter will be referred to the School Attendance Team for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

Medical and Dental Appointments

- Upon leaving school, the office will note that the child is offsite and the reason, e.g. dentist. The parent or carer is requested to 'sign out',
- Upon return the parent or carer and child will report to the office when the child will be 'signed in'.
- The school will encourage parents or carer to make non-urgent medical appointments out of school hours.
- If these appointments do fall in school time the parent should be aware that the child should return to school for the rest of the session.
- Medical evidence will be required i.e.: dentist/doctor appointment card.

Exclusion

- Exclusion is very rare but in the event that exclusion is necessary the LA guidelines will be used. If a lengthy period of exclusion is required reintegration will be planned and monitored.

Moving

- If children move on to another school contact is awaited from the new school and then the child's records are sent on to them. However, if a child leaves the school without informing us, after two week's absence if we are still unable to contact the Parents or carers, records will be sent to the Local Authority School Attendance Team as required.
- This will also trigger a missing child enquiry to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.

Responsibilities

- Parents and carers are responsible for their child's attendance.
- Classteachers are responsible for day-to-day monitoring of attendance and punctuality through registration.
- The Attendance Officer is responsible for monitoring the weekly attendance data and reporting it to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher and Attendance Officer meet regularly, at least weekly, to share information and take appropriate action.
- The Headteacher and the Attendance Officer, are responsible for tracking the data and reviewing the protocols in place for attendance and punctuality.
- The Attendance Officer is responsible for reporting to Governors and working with families to improve attendance.
- The Governing Board is responsible for monitoring progress and questioning and supporting the school.