

**MILLBROOK COMBINED SCHOOL
AND NURSERY**



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Reviewed January 2011

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

The Governing Body is required by law to maintain attendance registers. The purpose of the policy is to promote full attendance and punctual arrival at school by all pupils so that maximum educational benefit is obtained.

1.0 Context

- Parents are expected to ensure that all children attend school every day and that they arrive punctually.
- Parents are expected to collect children promptly when the school day ends. With the exception of attending after school clubs, there is no provision for pupils to remain in school waiting to be collected.
- Teachers are expected to maintain an accurate record of pupils' attendance ensuring that registers comply with the standard procedures. (Appendix 1)
- The school and LA monitor the attendance registers to ensure accuracy of information and to take action to improve attendance and punctuality where this is necessary.
- The school and LA make regular reports to all concerned following the scrutiny of registers. The school and staff are required to take any necessary action with immediate effect.
- Registers are important documents and are kept in the school office for safety.
- The school uses the SIMs software programme for recording, monitoring and evaluating attendance and punctuality.
- This policy takes into account the times of sessions for children aged 3 to 11 years working within three stages of education.

2.0 Aims

- To ensure statutory requirements are met
- To ensure a consistency of approach throughout the school
- To promote self-discipline
- To ensure the involvement of both home and school in the implementation of this policy and further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions
- To promote effective partnerships with the EWO service
- To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors

3.0 Procedures

- 3.1** The times of the school day are provided to parents and guardians. Times are published in the school prospectus and school notice boards.
- 3.2 Nursery Pupils 3-4 years**
The morning session starts punctually at 8:45am and registration is complete by 9:00am and registers are sent to the office. The afternoon session starts punctually at 12:30pm and registration is complete by 12:45pm and registers are sent to the office.
- 3.3 Reception Pupils 4-5 years**
The day starts punctually at 8:50am. Parents or guardians should ensure that their children are in their group rooms by that time. Registration is completed by 9:15am and 1:15pm and registers sent to the school office.
- 3.4 Key Stages 1 and 2**
The school day starts punctually at 8.50am. Pupils can be on the playground from 8:40am and enter the building at 8:45am. The duty teachers signal the start of school at 8.50 am. Everyone must be in class and registration completed by 9.00 a.m.
- 3.5** The afternoon session starts punctually at 1:00pm for Key Stage 1 pupils and 1:15pm for Key Stage 2 pupils.
- 3.6 Key Stage 1:**
At the end of lunch time mid-day supervisors ring the bell at 12:55pm. On the second bell, pupils' line up in class groups ready to walk into school with their class teachers. Registration for Key Stage 1 pupils is completed by 1:05pm.
- 3.7 Key Stage 2**
At the end of lunch time mid-day supervisors ring the bell at 1:05 p.m. On the second bell, pupils' line up in class groups ready to walk into school with their class teachers. Registration for Key Stage 2 pupils is completed by 1:20pm.
- 3.8** At the end of each morning and afternoon registration period, registers are sent to the office at 9:15am/1:20pm and are 'closed' at 9:30am/1:30pm for security. Any pupil arriving after that time is recorded as late.
- 3.9** The exterior doors are closed when pupils have entered the building. Any pupils arriving late, enters via the front entrance, escorted by the Learning Mentor between 9:00am and 9:15am.
- 3.10** Late entries are entered in the late book and are transferred to the class registers by the Learning Mentor/attendance officer. The pupils' lateness is recorded using the symbols outlined in the standard procedure. (Appendix 4) Once registers are closed (9:30am/1:30pm), lates are recorded as absence (u).

4.0 Emergency Procedures

- 4.1 In the event of an emergency the registers are taken to the playground by the Office Manager and distributed to class teachers to check that all children registered as present for that school session have evacuated the building safely.

5.0 Procedures to follow up pupil absence

- 5.1 Any absence, for which there is no reason provided by 9.30, is followed up that morning. The Learning Mentor/attendance officer will then phone the parent or guardian's home to establish the reason for absence. Parents can also report any absence by phone, on the messaging system, which is recorded daily. The parent is advised that there must be a written explanation given when the child returns to school. This procedure is followed for the afternoon session should a pupil not return to school from lunch at home.
- 5.2 If the school has not been able to make contact with the parent or have not received an appropriate response in 3 days a letter is sent by the Headteacher to the parent advising them of the actions the school will now take. The school must contact the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to investigate the absence. There is agreed LA procedure. (Appendix 3)
- 5.3 The EWO will pursue non-attendance at school with the child's parents or guardians. This may result in a court order to ensure compliance. To assist the family to ensure the pupil's attendance the school will work with them and establish a pastoral support programme and/or behaviour support programme where necessary.
- 5.4 Any absence for which there is not a good reason or for which the school has received no explanation is regarded as unauthorised absence and recorded as such in the register.
- 5.5 Pastoral support is provided from the Learning Mentor for pupils/families with long term attendance/punctuality difficulties.

6.0 Absence as a result of exclusion

- 6.1 Absence as a result of exclusion on disciplinary grounds is dealt with separately under the school's procedures for exclusion. Statutory regulations apply to the actions that can be taken by the Headteacher, acting Headteacher and governing body.

7.0 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

- 7.1 The school and LA undertake regular reviews of pupils' attendance. The school works with parents and Education Welfare Service to ensure good attendance and punctuality.
- 7.2 A running record is maintained for each child on the number of attendances that are achieved against the total number of sessions that the school has been open. Attendance and punctuality are discussed at the regular meetings held during the year between teachers and parents. Teachers record pupils' attendance in the annual reports on pupils' achievements. This includes the number of times pupils' were off school without permission.

- 7.3 Daily/weekly analysis of attendance for individuals or families is carried out by the Learning Mentor/attendance officer to identify patterns which may cause concern.
- 7.4 The school and EWO to ensure that the relevant symbols are used correctly carry out periodic checks on registers. Any issues arising are reported to teachers and the governing body.
- 7.5 Attendance is reported weekly to the Headteacher of all children in each class who below 90% attendance over the last 5 weeks and is reported termly for all children in each class who have maintained full attendance or 95% or above for the term. Recognition for good attendance is celebrated in weekly assemblies and weekly league tables for each class and termly for individuals. Rewards consist of termly prizes for the class which has the best attendance figures; certificates and vouchers for those pupils who have a termly attendance figure of 95-100% and presents for the parents of children who achieve 100% attendance each term. Punctuality is also monitored weekly and House Points are given to the best class during Key Stage assemblies.
- 7.6 The school publishes its rates of authorised and unauthorised absence in its prospectus and school profile.
- 7.7 Any changes to the start and end of the school sessions are made only at the beginning of the school year. Other changes may be introduced at the beginning of any school term following appropriate consultation.
- 7.8 The school keeps admission and attendance registers for at least 3 years.

8.0 Leave of absence

- 8.1 Parents may request up to ten days leave of absence per year. Only the school can authorise absence: parents cannot. Request forms are available from the school (Appendix 4). The approval of the governing body is required and is usually given on their behalf by the Headteacher. The impact on the child's education is considered and where this is judged to be deleterious authorisation is withheld. As a result, any subsequent absence is recorded as 'unauthorised'. An appointment with the Headteacher is also needed, in order to discuss the leave of absence request before approval can be made.
- 8.2 Long absences abroad are regarded as unauthorised if continues after the initial 10 days granted and are to be discouraged. Parents are advised to give a return date in writing in order to ensure that their child has a guaranteed place on his or her return.
- 8.3 Dental and medical appointments should be made outside the school day when ever possible. Where unavoidable, any absence should be supported by a letter.

9.0 Length of school day and term

- 9.1 The dates of the school term are decided by the LA and published annually by the governing body in its prospectus. The governing body decides when sessions should begin and end on each school day. The government recommends the following lesson time:
- 15 hours for children aged 3 to 5 years
 - 21 hours for pupils aged 5 to 7 years
 - 23.5 hours for pupils 8 to 11 years.

9.2 The recommended time does not include time for collective worship, registration or breaks. Enough time should be allowed for these activities.

9.3 At Millbrook, the following session times are followed:

Nursery Pupils 3-4 years

08.45	Morning session begins
11.45	Morning session ends
12.30	Afternoon session begins
15.30	Afternoon session ends

Reception Pupils 4-5 years

08.50	School begins
11.45	Morning session ends
11.45-13.00	Lunch time
15.30	End of session

Key Stage 1 Pupils 6-7 years

08.50	School begins
10.15-10.30	Morning break
12.00-13.00	Lunch time
15.15	End of session

Key Stage 2 Pupils 8-11 years

08.50	School begins
11.00-11.15	Morning break
12.15-13.10	Lunch time
15.25	End of session

This policy also runs alongside the school's Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Register is

A Legal Document.....

The responsibility for the register lies with the teacher of that class. If cases are disputed in Court the Headteacher or class teacher may be called as a witness by the defence or the prosecution. Producing the actual register in Court is a rare occurrence but copies of register entries are produced regularly (by the Education Welfare Service) both in Magistrate's and Family Proceedings Courts.

The parents of all statutory school aged children have a legal responsibility to ensure regular and punctual school attendance, (Education Act 1996). Failure to do this may result in a prosecution by the Education Welfare Service acting on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council. Under Section 7 and 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents may be given fines of up to £1,000 each, plus the costs of the Education Welfare Service for the preparation of the case.

Under the Children Act 1989 the Education Welfare Service may apply for an Education Supervision Order. This means that the Education Welfare Service has a right to be involved in important education decisions; and to impose conditions on the child and the parent(s). a copy of the register is essential evidence for the Court.

An Early Warning System.....

Children who don't come to school regularly may be "at risk". They are certainly in danger of poor academic achievement and the possibility of social exclusion later on in life. Unless the right education foundations are laid, young people may leave school without the essential qualifications and social skills for their adult life. Children may need protection within their families, or due to a lifestyle that makes them vulnerable in the wider community.

In Child Protection

Children may not attend school due to neglect or physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Domestic violence may also affect a child's ability to attend school regularly.

Of Young Carers

Research suggests that many more children than we are aware of are caring for sick and disabled parents or relatives. They may be late or absent regularly to carry out their caring responsibilities.

Of Truancy

Many children truant from school as they are avoiding something or someone. They may be influenced by others to stay away from school or unable to cope in school because of problems at home. They may be being bullied in school or on the way to and from school.

Of Disaffection from School

If children miss time at school they lose touch with their friends, they don't understand the work, they often find it difficult to cope when they come back.

Of Special Education Needs

They may not be able to do the work so avoid coming in to school.

Of Illness

Regular illness may cover up any of the above problems or need special attention and support for a particular condition, e.g. post viral fatigue syndrome, migraine.

A Monitoring System.....

Many pupils have individual plans to support their achievement in school, or care at home; these cannot be effective if the pupil is not in school.

Child Protection

When a child is registered on the Child Protection Register a child protection plan is drawn up. Regular attendance at school is often one of the goals of such a plan. Irregular attendance can draw the attention of the core group to problems continuing for the child.

Special Needs

When a child is registered on the Special Education Needs Register an Individual Education Plan is drawn up to support their progress in school. Irregular attendance may show that the plan is not helping the child to cope in school. The plan will not succeed if the child is not in school.

Disaffection

A Pastoral Support Programme may be organized for pupils at risk of exclusion or truancy. Programmes of support cannot work if the child is not in school.

GUIDANCE ON ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

(See Education Welfare Service Guidelines for Good Practice in Keeping Attendance Registers for greater detail)

- 1) Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 2) If a pupil is of compulsory school age and is absent the register must show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.
 - **Authorised** absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards.
 - **All other absence must be treated as unauthorised.**

Parents may not authorise absence.

Mark all holidays and INSET training days clearly; also where the school is closed due to bad weather, structural damage etc.

Any changes must be clearly recorded - **DO NOT USE TIPPEX.**

Date all notes from parents on day of receipt. Transfer notes to a place of safe-keeping at regular intervals.

Do not remove a child from the register without the authority of the Headteacher.

Key to codes		
/ Present (AM)	I Illness (not medical/dental appointments)	T Traveller absence
\ Present (PM)	J Interview	U Late (after registers closed)
B Educated off site (not Dual Registration)	L Late (before reg closed)	V Educational visit or trip
C Other authorised circumstances	M Medical / Dental appointments	W Work Experience
D Dual registration (attending other establishments)	N No reason yet provided for absence	# School closed to pupils & staff
E Excluded	O Unauthorised Abs (not covered by any other code)	Y Enforced closure
F Extended family holiday (agreed)	P Approved sporting activity	X Non-compulsory school age absence
G Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)	R Religious observance	Z Pupil not on roll
H Annual family holiday (agreed)	S Study Leave	- All should attend / No mark recorded

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

First Day Contact

Recent projects have shown that the single most effective thing schools can do to reduce absence is to contact the parent on the first day of absence.

Encourage parents, through newsletters, school policies, etc, to let you know on the first day of absence.

Challenge Absence

Do not accept vague reasons for absence. It is the school who “authorises” the absence, not the parent.

Work with your Education Welfare Officer

They will be in touch with other agencies e.g. GP’s. Social Services etc.

Referral Criteria: Education Welfare Officer’s will discuss taking a referral based on the previous five week period if:

- a) Attendance is less than 90% primary
Attendance is less than 80% secondary
- b) There is a pattern of broken weeks
- c) Continuous unexplained absence of more than ten days
- d) Sudden absence with extra information that the child is at risk
- e) Continuing condoned absence

Education Welfare Officers will also take referrals directly from parents or other agencies e.g. Social Services, if a child is refusing to attend school or is considered to be “at risk”.

All absences of more than ten days must be notified to the LA on the appropriate form.

APPENDIX 2

DELETIONS FROM THE REGISTER: THE EDUCATION (PUPIL REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS 1995 - SEC.9(1).

The following are prescribed as the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age shall be deleted from the admission register:

- a) Where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local education authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local education authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude other wise than at school;
- b) That he has been registered as a pupil of another school;
- c) In a case not falling within sub-paragraph (a) of this paragraph, that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school;
- d) Except in the case of a boarder, that he has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered;
- e) In the case of a pupil granted leave of absence exceeding ten school days for the purpose of a holiday in accordance with regulation 8(3), that the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted, and the proprietor is not satisfied that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- f) That he is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- g) That he has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than four weeks and both the proprietor of the school and the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil;
- h) That the pupil has died;
- i) That he will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and intends to cease to attend school;
- j) In the case of a pupil at a school other than a maintained school, that he has ceased to be a pupil of the school;
- k) Where the pupil is registered at a maintained school, that he has been permanently excluded from the school; or
- l) Where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception class at the school.

REGISTER CHECK PROCEDURES

Education Welfare Officer's will carry out a register check in each of their allocated schools on an annual basis.

The date and time of the check will be pre-arranged by the Education Welfare Officer with the school to ensure that the registers are available and that a suitable place is arranged for the Education Welfare Officer to carry out the check.

Feedback will be made by written report to the school within two weeks of the check having been carried out. If necessary a follow up discussion will be arranged with the Headteacher and appropriate staff to look at any issues that arise from the check.

The Education Welfare Officer will request access to notes for a specified period of time in order to track the process for recording authorisation of absences and the procedure for making changes to the register.

Education Welfare Officer's Written Report should cover:

- ◆ General overview of the standard of the registers
- ◆ Identification of pupils that may require more detailed follow up (to be noted separately)
- ◆ Specific details about problem areas
- ◆ Suggestions for improvement to the standard as advised in the guidelines.

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Aiming for Excellence - Learning for Life

**Application for Leave of Absence for Annual Holiday
Regulation 8 - Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995**

PLEASE NOTE: PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Name of School: _____

Proposed Dates of Absence From: _____ To: _____

I request permission from the school's Governing Body for my child:

Name: _____ Class: _____ to be granted Leave of Absence for the above dates.

Please give details and reasons for the proposed absence:

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date: _____

The completed form should be submitted to the Headteacher of your child's school not less than one month before the proposed period of absence. Parents are strongly advised to discuss the application with the class teacher (primary) before submission.

The Governing Body will carefully consider your request and may take your child's attendance record into account. If permission is refused any absence for the above period will be recorded at the end of the school year as unauthorised absence.

Permission will not be granted for leave of absence immediately prior to or during assessment or examination periods. In any case your school will not normally agree to your child missing more than ten school days for family holidays in any one school year.

Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life. If your child is absent for any period, he or she may miss essential elements of their learning programme.

Permission is granted for your son/daughter to have leave of absence during the above dates	
Permission cannot be granted for your son/daughter to have leave of absence during the above dates	

.....
Miss D Mansfield
Headteacher

OFFICE USE

Attendance certificate attached for the Head	
Appointment made with the Head	
Permission signed by the Head	
Entered into attendance module	
Letter sent to parents	

