

Parrett and Axe CofE, VA Primary School



Policy on Attendance

1. Introduction

- 1.1. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- 1.3. From September 1st 2013, the school is prohibited from “granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made IN ADVANCE and there are EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES relating to the application.” The right to grant “not exceeding ten school days for the purpose of a holiday” has been removed.

2. Definitions

2.1. Authorised absence

- I. An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- II. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2. Unauthorised absence

- I. An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- II. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3. If a child is absent

- 3.1. When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.
- 3.2. When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.
- 3.3. A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.4. If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4. Requests for leave of absence

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child. We expect parents to contact the school AT LEAST A WEEK IN ADVANCE to allow the head teacher to make a decision on whether the request will be granted.

5. Long-term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

6. Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1. The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the L.A. and work with them to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2. The L.A., reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7. Monitoring and review

- 7.1. It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly update from the head teacher through the Resources. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as possible.
- 7.2. Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 7.3. This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Reviewed 10.10.23 by FGB

Review date October 2025