



School Aim
To make learning irresistible

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Pinewood Infant School recognises that it has a duty under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, 2015, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent Lead is the Head Teacher.

ATTENDANCE POLICY **Autumn 2016**

Mission Statement

Pinewood Infant School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all students are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised (see below).

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving attendance at Pinewood Infant School is the responsibility of everyone in school community, including pupils, parents and staff.

Pupils

All pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Pupils who experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from their class teacher and, if the need should arise, from the head teacher.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible by telephone on the morning of the absence. A pupil's absence from school must be considered as un-authorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parents.

Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns that may arise over a child's attendance. The Head Teacher will write to parents whose child's attendance is cause for concern. If possible, parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. Parents whose first language is not English, or who have literacy difficulties, will be offered appropriate support from the school in matters of communication.

School

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. The school will employ a range of strategies (see below) to encourage good attendance and punctuality and, liaising closely with parents and the School Attendance Advisor, will promptly investigate all absenteeism. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Registration

Registers will be called promptly at 8.45 am and at 1.20pm and will be marked in red or black in accordance with the list of symbols shown in the register front sheet.

Registers will close at 9.00am and at 1.30pm. If a pupil fails to arrive after the registers are closed, he/she will be marked as 'absent'. Pupils who arrive after the registers have been closed should report to the school office to be signed in the late book.

After morning registration has taken place, any child being removed from school by a parent so that they may attend an appointment (medical, external exam etc) must be entered into the Pupil Movement book with the appropriate reason stated. This will enable the class teacher to account for all children marked as present in the event of a fire. When the child returns into school they must be signed back into the Pupil Movement book. However, if that child does not return to school and is consequently marked as absent in afternoon registration then the appropriate absent code will be entered into the register.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

It is vital that all staff adhere to the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence.

Pinewood Infant School will decide on how an absence is to be recorded according to 'School Attendance: Policy and Practice on Categorisation of Absence' (DFE 1994). This states that:

Absence can be **authorised** if:

- The pupil was absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body of the school').
- The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belongs.
- The school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following;
 - the child's transport to and from school
 - boarding accommodation for the child to become a registered pupil at or near the school' and
 - enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a nearer his/her home
- The pupil is the child of a Traveller parents and the conditions as stated in paragraph 47 of the guidance are met.
- There is a family bereavement.
- The pupil is attending an approved off site activity or is receiving off site tuition.
- The pupil is attending a Pupil Referral Unit.
- The pupil is participating in an approved public performance.
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g. if a pupil is attending the graduation of an older sibling)

Absence should be **unauthorised** if:

- No explanation is forthcoming.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings (the guidance suggests that absence in such cases should only be granted in exceptional circumstances)
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions (e.g. a birthday)

Holidays

Amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration, England) Regulations 2006 remove references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days. The amendments make it clear that head teachers MAY NOT grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Procedures for Following Up Absence

- The parent of an absent pupil will be contacted by text on the morning of absence by 9:30am. If this text does not prompt a response then a follow up phone call will be made later that morning. This is chased up by the class teacher if the reason for absence is still unexplained on the child's return to school.
- If a pupil is persistently (or intermittently) absent or late, and the school's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful Targeted Support will be informed and they will make a home visit.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

- Pinewood Infant School will work to provide an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcome, that pupils feel their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.
- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all pupils. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to pupil's needs.
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, correlate attendance with achievement, set targets, and support and inform policy/practice.
- Pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern will be contacted in writing by the attendance Lead. The Head Teacher will meet with parents/carers to discuss these and if an improvement is not made the Targeted Support will be contacted.
- We have produced a Pinewood Infant School booklet for parents' information in a child friendly format.
- Parents will be reminded regularly via newsletters, the school brochure, parents' evenings etc of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils who are absent through sickness for any extended period will, when appropriate, have work sent home to them and will be given suitable support from school on their return.
- Pupils who have been absent for whatever reason for extended period will, when appropriate, have individually tailored reintegration programmes prepared for them
- The Head Teacher will make an annual report to the governing body on attendance matters.
- The Head Teacher will, when appropriate, liaise with other agencies such as Educational Psychology Service, Social Services, School and Family Support Services (SFSS), when this may serve to support and assist pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Regular visits are encouraged from the junior feeder school in order to ensure the smoothest possible transfer from infant to junior.