

Millbrook Primary School



Policy for school attendance

Updated: October 2018

MILLBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Parents are responsible by law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should familiarise themselves with this attendance policy and should work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect a child's attendance

Philosophy

Millbrook Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

Principles

Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Millbrook Primary School are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

As a school, we will:

- ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law,
- complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session,

- stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence,
- display attendance rates around the school and reward good and improved attendance of all pupils,
- promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence,
- consult with all members of the school community, our Education Welfare Officer and the Attendance Support Team in developing and maintaining the whole-school attendance policy,
- ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the school governors,
- send newsletters each term to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues, additionally update school website with any attendance related issues,
- work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed,
- have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.

Procedures

Registration will be carried out in the morning and afternoon session and registers will be marked promptly at the start of these sessions. Should a student arrive after the start of registration but before the registers have closed he/she will be marked as late for that session.

If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence we will:

- follow 'First day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone/text message.
- School Attendance Letters will be sent to parents where attendance is a concern we may ask parents to provide medical evidence where absence is due to illness.
- refer to the school's nominated attendance person (NAP) or Education Welfare Officer (EWO), to follow up absence if no response is received after 5 days of absence and consider a referral to the *'Children & Family Locality*

Services' or contact 'Family Connect' if no contact can be made with the parent,

- Invite the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM), as appropriate. This meeting should include a senior member of staff, parent, pupil and the NAP/EWO. The aim of this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance,
- Help the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then a Reintegration Programme will be implemented. The programme will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible
- All schools, including academies, free schools and independent schools, have a responsibility to share information with the LA of any pupil or young person **who has been out of school for 10 consecutive days without permission.** Millbrook Primary School will share this information with Telford & Wrekin Council. Local policies for 'Children Out Of School' and 'Children Missing Education' are in place and will be followed by designated members of school staff.
- Contact **Family Connect 01952 385385** for further guidance on available support.

In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the pupils the importance of their education.

Term-Time Holidays

Millbrook Primary School do not authorise holidays in term-time following Telford and Wrekin procedures on absences from school. In addition to this Telford and Wrekin, from 1st September 2013 have amended the criteria for issuing Holiday Penalty Notices (HPN) and these will now be issued for 10 consecutive sessions **WHICH IS 5 SCHOOL DAYS.**

HPNs (often known as 'fines') are issued by the Attendance Support Team to parents who take their children out of school during term time without getting authorisation from the school. The penalty is £60, rising to £120 if not paid within 21 days, per parent, per child. If parent/carers fail to pay the penalty within 28 days they will be prosecuted.

Performance

It is important to set realistic targets for both attendance and persistent absence; these targets will be set during the Autumn term of each academic year, in consultation with the Education Welfare Officer. The governing body must approve the school target for attendance to be set for the following

academic year. The target should be sent to the Group Manager, Admissions, Attendance and School Organisation by the end of the Autumn term at the latest. In compiling an Action Plan, the school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.

When evaluating success the Millbrook Primary School will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absences has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal and Social Education (PHSE) lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons

Practice

Millbrook Primary School will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the school's NAP/EWO, if appropriate
- Recording (and retaining) carefully, all telephone messages
- A signed copy of any correspondence is retained by the school
- A referral is made to AST (the Attendance Support Team) for intervention

Attendance Data

A range of attendance data will be collected each half term in order to identify particular cohorts whose attendance causes concern.

As part of this process a PA (Persistent Absentee) Register will be maintained by the Attendance Officer and regularly reviewed.

Communication

Our School Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

- a précis on our website;
- regular newsletter items;
- local authority attendance information leaflets

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Adopted by Governors November 2018