



Measham Church of England Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Next Review March 2023

We are a caring Christian community and we believe that every member of the school should feel valued, respected and be treated fairly.

Our vision is:

'To be a school where happy children flourish.'

Our vision and values are at the heart of the school and shows our commitment to supporting children and families and promoting excellent teaching and learning. We are proud to serve the whole community and it is our aim that through working together, we shape the children and the adults within it, to live fully and **'Love your neighbour as yourself'** Mark 12:31. Loving your neighbour as yourself is something we all want to do.

We are an inclusive school, where everyone has a valuable contribution to make to our school community. Our School Values, based on Christian principles are embedded and reflected in all that we do. These values have been chosen by the school community as a set of moral standards we should understand and try to 'live'.

Aims:

Measham CE Primary School is a successful school and the children's attendance plays its part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This school attendance policy is written to reflect the law and also the guidance produced by the Department of Education.

It is very important therefore that children attend regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Any absence (including lateness) affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law which may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (for each parent/carer) and/or prosecution.

Parents might reconsider taking holidays during term time if they were aware that missing lessons may never be repeated and that:

- 1 day absence = 5 lessons missed
- 3 days missed = 15 lessons missed
- 1 week absence = 25 lessons missed
- 2 weeks absence = 50 lessons missed

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Implement a clear and coherent whole school policy on attendance
- Identify a lead manager for the school attendance, the Head Teacher.



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- Ensure that all staff subscribe to a consistent, whole school approach to improving and maintaining pupil attendance
- Detail parental responsibilities for attendance in the school prospectus and at admission meetings giving a clear message on the law, times of school day and procedures in cases of absence.
- Provide curriculum support for individual pupils with an identified need in order to prevent disaffection which may lead to non-attendance
- Introduce reward and incentive initiatives
- Inform parents of attendance initiatives by letter, newsletters and at Parents' Evening
- Make contact with parents/carers on 1st day of absence
- Monitor all pupils with less than 95% attendance
- Send parents termly attendance reports.
- Send letters to parents/carers regarding concerns
- Monitor attendance patterns and punctuality and using data for comparative purposes
- Reward 100%
- Conduct regular attendance reviews
- Keep school governors informed of all attendance matters
- Discuss with parent consultation group on how parents/carers, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all pupil absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our school system. All our PA pupils and their parents/carers are subject to an Action Plan.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;

NB Notes/letters that you send us will be stored on your child's file.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence (and on subsequent days) if we have not heard from you;
- Write to you if we are concerned about your child's attendance to alert you to a concerning emerging pattern or level of absence.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Head Teacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Pupil Services Court Team if attendance is a major concern.

NB. Letters and notes of our contact with you will be stored on your child's file.

Telephone Numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about a variety of matters, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.



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Understanding types of absence:

By law, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a genuine reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause.

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments
(If absences are considered excessive, proof may be required by way of a doctor's note)
- Days of religious observance
- Public performances, where participation has been agreed by the school
- Exceptional family circumstances, (e.g. bereavement)
- Approved sporting activity
- Exclusion (fixed period)

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Frequent absences attributed to minor ailments but not supported by medical evidence
- Looking after the house
- Looking after siblings or sick parents (except in genuine crisis for a limited period)
- Shopping during school hours
- Birthdays
- Day Trips
- Holidays (not agreed by the school)



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Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance should be addressed by the school, the parents/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. If a child arrives 10 minutes late each day that adds up to 50 minutes weekly = equivalent to one lesson weekly.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.45am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked at **9.00am**. At **9.15am** the registers will be closed.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays During Term Time:

The Government has removed the discretion for Head teachers to grant absence for pupils to take a holiday during term time.

The only exception to this is for a reason considered to be 'exceptional' by the Head teacher. Having taken advice on this matter, Measham CE School will consider the following as exceptional circumstances:-

- a holiday for a terminally ill child or sibling
- a family holiday with a terminally ill parent/carer
- a family holiday following the recent death of a parent/carer

Other exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis but will **not** include-

- financial reasons for taking a holiday in term time
- visits to family and friends living abroad
- holidays in term time due to the work commitments of parents/carers in school holiday periods
- holiday taken as part of a family wedding

The process for requesting leave during term time for a family holiday is to write directly to the Head teacher at least four weeks prior to the date of absence, stating the exceptional circumstance. The Head teacher will consider the circumstances and write back to parents/carers with the outcome of his decision.

If the reason is not felt to be an exceptional circumstance or holiday has been taken without notification then the written response to parents/carers will indicate that the absence will be unauthorised, if the holiday is taken. Parents/carers are also at risk of being issued with a Penalty Notice as per Leicestershire County Council Code of Conduct. (Although we are an Academy, Leicestershire County Council retain responsibility for pupil attendance at school). As a result of the change to Government legislation, the updated Code of Conduct states that the County Council are very likely to issue a Penalty Notice for 5 days or more of unauthorised absence due to a family holiday. In this case a Penalty Notice of £60.00 is issued to each parent/carer for each child and must be paid within 21 days or will increase to £120.00. A further period of 7 days is then allowed for payment prior to prosecution.



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Attendance Target

We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling. The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. Our target is for every children to achieve 98% attendance or above. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletter and we ask for your full support.

We report to parents at the end of the school year using the following formula:

98% - 100%	Outstanding
95% - 98%	Good
90% – 95%	Below Expectation
<90%	Requires Improvement



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The Registration System

The school will use a computerised system for keeping school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information. CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	school closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances