



Attendance and Lateness Policy 2018 (Review Autumn 2021)

Relevant Legislation and documentation:

Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations
1995

Education Act 1996
London Child Protection Procedures, LCPC,
2018 and updated annually
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Behaviour
SEND
Medical Needs
Staff induction procedures
Information Retention
Anti-bullying policy

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy aims to outline Pooles Park Primary School's position on attendance and lateness in order that all involved in the education of children at the school have a clear understanding of the expectations placed upon them and the role that they play in maximizing attendance and minimizing lateness. In doing this we seek to ensure that children get the most out of their time at school.
- 1.2 Attendance and achievement are clearly linked. A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt the continuity of their learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which we all must seek to avoid.
- 1.3 Lateness and achievement are clearly linked. Children arriving late to school not only miss the introduction to the lesson in which they arrive, but are more likely to arrive at school in a state which is not conducive to learning. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.
- 1.4 The late collection of children from school is also an important issue. All parents/carers have difficulties collecting their children from school from time to time, but when this becomes a frequent occurrence, it can be very distressing for the child and inconvenient for the school. This policy will therefore also address this issue and any references to 'attendance and lateness' include lateness in the collection of children from school.
- 1.5 There are 190 days in the school year. School gates open at 8:55am, the school bell rings at 9 am. The school gate closes at 9:05 and registers are completed by 9:15am. Children are considered to be 'unauthorised late' as of 9:15 am. School closes at 3:30pm[1], except in special circumstances, which parents are usually informed about in advance. Children attending after school clubs may be at the school up until

4.45pm, although each after school club has its own finishing time. Parents/carers will be informed in advance in writing of term times and teacher INSET dates.

2 AIMS

2.1 This policy aims to:

- Ensure that all school staff understands the procedures and expectations about attendance and the role that they play in executing them.
- Ensure that all parents/carers understand the procedures and expectations about attendance and the role that they play in executing them.
- Ensure that all pupils understand the procedures and expectations about attendance and the role that they play in executing them.

2.2 In order to achieve this:

- All relevant staff will be given a copy of this policy.
- A summary of the relevant parts of this policy will be sent home to all parents.
- Class teachers will communicate the relevant parts of this policy to the children at school.

3 RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

3.1 All children of compulsory school age have a right to attend school and it is the LEAs responsibility to ensure that there are places available for them. All parents/carers have a duty and a responsibility to ensure that their children are attending school and arriving on time (Education Act 1996).[2]

3.2 Schools have a legal obligation to take registers in order to monitor attendance and lateness (Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995). Marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are documents that may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school. They also contribute to pupils' end of year reports and to records of achievement.

3.3 The Assistant Head Teacher is overall responsible for monitoring attendance and lateness in the school. She does this in collaboration with the Pastoral Care Manager, class teachers, the school's administrative staff, and the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO). These people are named in Appendix I.

3.4 The Assistant Head Teacher will:

- Monitor attendance in order to identify pupils who are falling below expected levels. A call will be made to the home on the first day a child is absent. A letter will be sent to give parents the opportunity to explain absence where no reason has been given orally.

- Request a medical or circumstantial justification for absences of more than 4 consecutive days.
- A letter will be sent home when attendance falls below 95%.
- Contact parents / carers once a pupil's attendance falls below 85% to arrange a meeting.
- Children will be referred to EWS once attendance falls below 85%.
- Monitor lateness in order to identify pupils who are falling below expected levels. A letter will be sent home after a total of 6 late arrivals in a 6 week period, followed by a second letter advising of a possible Penalty Notice after a total of 12 is reached in this same 6 week period. A copy of this second letter will also be sent to the EWO.
- Deal with any non-collections of children after school.
- Check late collection of children through school records at the end of each half term in order to identify pupils who are consistently being collected late. At the end of each half term she will send a letter to parents/carers of children with 8 late collections in order to inform them that he would like to meet with them as soon as possible in order to seek explanation, offer support and find resolution.
- Monitor in a more informal ongoing way the attendance and lateness of pupils through discussions with relevant staff.
- Contact the EWO where issues around attendance and lateness cannot be resolved through discussion with parents/carers.
- Contact other relevant agencies (such as social services) when habitual late collection of children becomes an issue of neglect, if necessary.

3.5 Class teachers will:

- Mark the registers accurately twice daily, at 9:05am and 1:30pm.
- Record minutes late for children arriving between 9:05 and 9:15.
- Ensure that any children being collected late are marked into the late collection book in the office.
- Inform the Assistant Head Teacher of any concerns arising around attendance and lateness.
- Provide parents/carers with information about the attendance of their child(ren) through the annual reports.
- Ensure that any parents/carers approaching them with reasons for absences are directed to the school office.

3.6 The school administrative staff will:

- Check data has been entered correctly on SIMS.
- Call parents on the first day children are absent where the school has not been informed of a reason.
- Determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised and seek further advice from the Assistant Head Teacher where this is not clear cut.
- Send letter to parents/carers of children who have been away from school without explanation in order to seek clarification (and then determine whether absence is authorised/unauthorised).
- Record all absences as either authorised or unauthorised marking the reasons given by the parent/carer (or lack thereof) in registers.
- Record all late arrivals after 9:15 where the child will be recorded as unauthorised late.
- Involve the Assistant Head Teacher or in her absence a member of the senior leadership team where any children are not collected from school and they are unable to contact a parent/carer.
- Inform the Assistant Head Teacher of any concerns they have regarding the attendance and lateness of pupils as and when they arise.

- 3.7 The OSHL Manager will:
- Ensure that any children being collected late from OSHL clubs are marked into the late collection book in the office.
 - Involve the Assistant Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Head Teacher where any children are not collected from an OSHL club and they are unable to contact a parent/carer.
 - Deal with any non-collections of children after OSHL clubs supported by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and inform her Line Manager of any concerns they have regarding the persistent late collection of pupils as and when they arise.
- 3.8 The EWO will:
- Generally assist the school in overall monitoring of attendance and lateness.
 - Become involved in resolving issues of attendance and lateness where attempts made by the school to do so in collaboration with parents/carers fail. This may involve instigating legal proceedings.
- 3.9 Parents/carers can expect the school to monitor the attendance and lateness of all pupils and act in the interests of the child when problems arise in this area. We will always seek to first work in collaboration with parents/carers to ensure that children have acceptable attendance, and arrive and are picked up on time.
- 3.10 The school expects pupils and their parents/carers to work with them in order to ensure that attendance is acceptable, and that children arrive and are picked up on time. Children are expected to attend school for the full academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
- Authorised (Where the school is able to approve pupil absence)
 - Unauthorised (Where the school is not able to approve absence)

Parents/carers should inform the school office AND NOT THE CLASS TEACHER when their child is off school stating the reason. Absences are generally authorised where the child has to miss school unavoidably (e.g. sickness, injury, attendance at a funeral) and are classed as unauthorised where the absence is avoidable or deemed unnecessary (e.g. a relative is visiting, birthday, parent/carer unable to drop off the child) or when no reason is given.

- 3.11 Parents/carers are strongly urged to avoid booking family holidays during term time. Parents do not have the automatic right to take their child out of school for holidays, and the school is not able to grant leave.
- 3.12 If unauthorised holidays are taken Parents/ Carers will be issued with a Penalty Notice by the EWS.
- 3.13 Parents/carers should avoid booking dental, optical and doctor's appointment during school time as far as possible, although the school is aware that sometimes these appointments do need to be made during the school day. Parents/carers should inform the office or the Assistant Head Teacher if their child requires ongoing medical attention which is likely to cause disruption to their education so that plans can be made to support the child and their family in these circumstances.

4 PROCEDURES

- 4.1 School gates open at 8:55am and the school bell rings at 9:00 am. The school gate closes at 9:05 and registers are completed by 9:15am. Children are considered to be 'unauthorised late' as of 9:15am. School closes at 3:30pm[3], except in special circumstances which parents are usually informed about in advance. Any children

arriving at school after the gates close should enter via the main gate and inform the office that they are arriving late, so that their absence mark can be changed to a late. Teachers must check with late arriving children that they have done this, and if not send them down to the office.

- 4.2 Children will also be registered in class straight after lunch. For children who have been collected by parents/carers during lunchtime and taken out of school, the administrative staff will mark their absence with a reason in the register. However, if on completing this register a teacher sees that a child is absent in the afternoon but was present in the morning and is not aware of any reason for this, then they should send a note down to the office with the register highlighting this discrepancy. The office will then make further investigations and contact a member of the senior management team if further concerns arise.
- 4.3 At the end of the day the children are brought down to the playground at 3:30pm. All children should be collected by a parent/carer or agreed other person at this time unless:
- They are attending an OSHL club.
 - They are in year 6 and have parental permission to go home by themselves (it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to communicate this permission to the class teacher).

The school does not permit children in year 6 to collect younger siblings as the person responsible for taking them home.

- 4.4 For any children who are not collected by 3:40pm:
- They will be taken to the main office and marked into the late collection book by the class teacher.
 - If they have still not been collected by 3:50pm the administrative staff will then attempt to call the parent/carer.
 - If the administrative staff are unable to get hold of a parent/carer then they will inform the Assistant Head Teacher or in her absence the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher who will take responsibility for looking after the child.
 - If the child has still not been collected by 4:30pm and the school has not been given a reasonable explanation as to why this is the case, then the member of staff responsible for the child will call the social services duty team for further advice.
 - Any child who has not been collected by the time the school closes at 6pm and whose parents/carers the school has been unable to contact may have to be left in the care of social services. In this case, the member of staff responsible will leave a message for the family either by phone or with a note posted through the door informing them as to the whereabouts of their child.
- 4.5 For any child not collected promptly after an OSHL club:
- They will be taken to the main office and marked into the late collection book by the OSHL Manager.
 - The OSHL Manager will then attempt to call the parent/carer.
 - If the OSHL Manager is unable to get hold of a parent/carer then they will inform the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher who will take responsibility for looking after the child. If none of these people are at school then the child will stay with the OSHL Manager.
 - If the child has still not been collected within 15 minutes of the end of the OSHL club and the school has not been given a reasonable explanation as to why this is the case, then the member of staff responsible for the child will call the social services duty team for further advice.
 - Any child attending OSHL who has not been collected by the time the school closes at 5:45pm and whose parents/carers we have been unable to contact may have to be left in the care of social services. In this case, the member of staff

- responsible will leave a message for the family either by phone or with a note posted through the door informing them as to the whereabouts of their child.
- 4.6 If a child is absent from the school, the parent/carer should contact the school office as soon as possible and preferably on the first day of absence to inform them. This can be done in person, by phone or through a note sent in to school with a sibling or with the child when they return to school. The administrative staff or Assistant Head Teacher will then inform the parent as to whether this is an authorised or unauthorised absence, or whether they need to seek further clarification on the matter and inform them later.
- 4.7 The Assistant Head Teacher will contact the parent/carer to discuss issues of attendance and/or lateness if a child:
- Is absent from school without explanation for a block of more than one week (the administrative staff will alert the Assistant Head Teacher in these instances).
 - Is unauthorised absent from school for 5 or more days during any half term.
 - If their attendance falls below 85%.
 - Arrives late at school on 6 or more days during any half term.
 - Is collected late from school or an OSHL club 8 or more times during any half term or persistently over a shorter period of time.
- 4.8 If after discussion with parents/carers the issues which have been addressed are still not resolved and the parent/carer seems unwilling to find a resolution, the Assistant Head Teacher will contact the EWO to discuss the matter further. The EWO may then become actively involved and contact the family direct to discuss the issues further or begin legal proceedings if necessary.
- 4.9 After a prolonged period of absence it will be the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the child is supported in their reintegration into the class and is able to join in with the work. In exceptional circumstances, the class teacher may request the assistance of the Pastoral Care Manager in this matter (for example, if a child has been away due to bereavement).

5 STRATEGIES USED BY THE SCHOOL TO PROMOTE GOOD ATTENDANCE AND REDUCE LATENESS

- 5.1 The school will employ the following strategies in order to encourage children to assist the school in improving attendance and reducing lateness.
- Weekly whole school assemblies addressing the issue of attendance and lateness where classes get a golden ticket for being class of the week. Tickets also given for most punctual class. The class with the most tickets will receive a reward at the end of the term.
 - Weekly 100% attendance stickers will be given out by Class Teachers.
 - End of half term certificates for children who have 100% attendance and punctuality.
 - End of year prizes for children with the best or most improved attendance.
 - Class attendance charts used to keep track of children with 100% attendance.
 - Trip in July for all those with 100% for the whole year.
- 5.2 The school will employ the following strategies in order to encourage parents/carers to assist the school in improving attendance and reducing lateness.
- Publication of attendance and lateness reward winners in the school newsletter.
 - Letters home to parents/carers as outlined in this policy.

- Meeting with pupils and parents where attendance and lateness has become an issue.
- Referrals to other support networks and agencies (e.g. Islington Children's Support Service)
- Referral to the Education Welfare Service.

6 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THIS POLICY

- 6.1 This policy will be implemented during the 2018 - 2019 academic year after consultation with parents/carers, staff, governors and the education welfare service.
- 6.2 The policy will be reviewed by the Assistant Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher at the start of the Autumn Term 2021. Any parts of the policy which have proven to be unworkable will be redrafted in consultation with relevant bodies.

APPENDIX I

The Pastoral Care Manager is:
Maggie Ryan

The school administrative staff are:
Marie Ruane
Kim Porter

The Head Teacher is:
Greg Crawford

The Attendance Lead is:
Craig Taylor

The school's Education Welfare Officer is:
Martin Fullbrook

[1] Nursery times are slightly different, with morning sessions running 8:55am - 11:55am, and afternoon sessions 1:00pm - 3:20pm. Afternoon register is sent to the office at 1:10pm. For children collected late from nursery, the same procedures will apply as for years R – 6.

[2] It is not compulsory for children below the age of 5 to attend school and therefore aspects of this policy relating to non-attendance do not apply to these children.

[3] Nursery times are slightly different, with morning sessions running 8:55am - 11:55am, and afternoon sessions 1:00pm - 3:20pm. Afternoon register is sent to the office at 1:10pm. For children collected late from nursery, the same procedures will apply as for years R – 6.