



## Attendance & Punctuality Policy



At Manor Primary School we recognise the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable the children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored weekly and effective partnership with parents/carers is sought, as we recognise that regular attendance can only be maintained with their effective support. We expect all children on roll to attend school every day when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do everything we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures to support them. We strongly believe that an important factor in promoting good attendance is our encouragement of positive attitudes towards school and learning. Good attendance supports positive social relationships with peers and helps to form lasting relationships.

We believe that we must do everything possible to facilitate regular and punctual attendance at school because:

- Pupils have the right to full time education and therefore the school and local authority have a responsibility to ensure that each child receives an efficient full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude including any special educational needs the child may have.
- Regular attendance is essential in raising academic standards.
- Education can maximise opportunities both at school and in later life by improving the life chances of our children and prepare them to be fully contributing citizens when they reach adulthood.
- Regular attendance maximises the opportunities to safeguard the children from harm, those children who are regarded as having poor attendance will be treated as vulnerable.
- Attendance principles are enshrined in British law, within the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989 and other associated legislation.

It is essential that a consistent approach in expecting good attendance and punctuality be applied by all staff. All teachers must actively monitor pupil attendance and punctuality and promote good practice. Our expectations are discussed with parents at all admission meetings.

Non-attendance is an important issue which is treated seriously. However each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting a child's school attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

In all cases early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is important parents/carers keep the school informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance; these responsibilities are outlined in the school prospectus.

Notifying the school of an absence can be made by parents/carers providing a written record covering absence from school although verbal communications can also be accepted. In cases of dental/medical visits during the school day an appointment card must be brought into school and pupils are to be collected by an adult once their presence has been made known to the school Reception staff. If a child's attendance shows patterns of excess sickness then parents will be requested to provide medical evidence – either by providing a copy of a prescription or medication labels. Staff will keep a copy of this evidence. Children are encouraged to attend school before and return to school after medical appointments because these seldom take all day.

In order to be able to work effectively with parents/carers on improving and maintaining good levels of attendance and punctuality it is imperative that the school has correct and up to date contact details for all those that have parental responsibility of pupils.

It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that the school has all current information necessary and reminders are sent out annually.

## **Strategies for promoting good attendance and punctuality**

1. Registers are completed at the beginning of the AM and PM sessions.
2. Registers are monitored on a weekly basis by school staff and a fortnightly basis by the Attendance Management Officer.
3. Phone calls are made for those pupils who have not attended school and no reasons have been provided.
4. Letters are sent on a monthly basis to those families whose children have missed school and no reason has been provided.
5. Phone calls, letters or meetings are arranged for those children who are beginning to show poor attendance/punctuality patterns.
6. Home visits by Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer for those children who do not have proof of address, have not registered with the school or who have poor attendance.
7. Support strategies are put in place on a case by case basis.
8. Those children who have an attendance of less than 85% are referred to the Attendance Management Officer.
9. The class with the best attendance is awarded a weekly certificate in assembly and the children receive 10 minutes of additional playtime.
10. Awarding certificates at the end of each term and at the end of the year, for good attendance and punctuality [99% and over].
11. Recording attendance in reports sent home with positive comments for effort.
12. End of year special trip for those children who have achieved 100% and 99% attendance for the year.
13. Sending letters home to parents and carers to acknowledge improvements in attendance and / or punctuality.
14. Regular reminders in newsletters about the benefits of regular attendance and good punctuality, as well as the school's expectations.
15. Targeted Extended Schools provision in circumstances where this will make a real difference to the child.
16. Guest speakers at high profile assemblies to explain the importance of good attendance in the world of work.
17. Holding specific opportunities for parents to discuss issues that may be affecting them e.g Punctuality Workshops.
18. Not authorising holidays during term time unless there are extenuating circumstances.
19. Staff at Manor are committed to promoting a positive attitude to learning and believe in providing pupils with opportunities to develop academically, morally and socially.

## Procedures for completion of registers

The register is a legal document. It is therefore essential that they are filled in accurately and neatly and that relevant information is recorded.

All registers must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. They should be sent to the reception office as soon as possible after the start of the session, ideally within 30 minutes.

Registers must be marked clearly in black. Children who are not there at the start of registration must receive an absence mark.

If children arrive during registration or later, but before 9.15 a.m. they will be given a present mark which will later be recorded on the electronic system as a late mark.

Children arriving after 9.15 a.m. will be recorded late after register shown as @.

Pupils arriving late are marked down in the Late Book by the receptionist, together with the time they arrived in school.

Notes for absences must be kept in the plastic wallet of the register folders.

In the event of a fire drill or real life fire the registers will be brought to class teachers in the playground fire assembly areas.

The following codes should be used on the SIMS register.

- L late arrival before the register was closed
- O Unauthorised Absence – These include things like shopping, going to the airport, relative visiting, buying shoes, going for a haircut or parent/sibling unwell.
- B Educated off site – This applies to children who attend other schools.
- C This is for exceptional circumstances only e.g. bereavement.
- E Excluded
- G Family holiday (not agreed)
- H Family holiday (agreed)
- I Illness
- J Interview
- M Medical/Dental – This is provided that a responsible adult has contacted the school.
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- R Day of religious observance in the religion to which the parent/child belongs.
- V Educational Visit or trip

<u>Authorised absences</u>	<u>Unauthorised absences</u>
Sickness Religious holidays Compassionate leave – following the death of a close family member Exclusions Medical appointments Attending interview at another school Parental holiday [when authorised by the Head teacher for exceptional circumstances]	Shopping Going to the airport Visiting a relative Buying shoes Waking up late Parent/sibling unwell No reason provided despite attempts to attain one. Birthdays

## **Procedures for following pupil absence and persistent lateness:**

1. When a pupil is absent a written record/telephone message or authorised verbal message must be obtained from the parent and duly recorded on the register.
2. All notes must be dated and kept. Remember notes do not always authorise absence e.g. trip to the airport or if a child has had a lot of absence.
3. Letters are sent home regularly to ask for explanations for absences from school.
4. Where a child develops a pattern of absence/lateness this is followed up in the first instance by the Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer.
5. If the situation is not resolved/child's attendance falls below 85% a formal referral will be made to the Attendance Management Officer.
6. Phone calls are made for key children on the first morning of their absence to ascertain why they are not in school.
7. The Attendance Management Officer meets with the Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer fortnightly to check registers.
8. Persistent lateness or absence of Nursery children can result in the place being withdrawn.
9. If a child does not return to school e.g following a school holiday the school has a responsibility to make various enquiries. The Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer will attempt to contact the family to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. A home visit will take place if contact cannot be made or if the child is thought to have moved.
10. A Child Missing Education (CME) form is sent to the CME/Courts Officer giving notification that a child has not returned to school. Depending on the circumstances the CME/Courts Officer is able to make further enquiries with benefit agencies and other Education Departments.
11. From 25.2.13, parents/carers can be fined £60 by Newham Council for taking (unauthorised) term time holidays, poor school attendance and other school non-attendance reasons including persistent arrival after the registers have closed (9.15am) as this contributes towards unauthorised absence.
12. If a parent/carer does not register their child to attend the school following being offered a school place and who have not made alternative suitable arrangements, contact will be attempted by the Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer by way of telephone, letter and/or home visit. If these attempts fail, a CME form is sent and a request for an Intention to Serve a School Attendance Order is made. If parent still does not respond (within 15 consecutive days) and child remains out of school, a School Attendance Order is requested. Failure to comply can result in the matter being referred for Court consideration.
13. Persistent lateness is monitored and responded to by the Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer and / or the Headteacher. This includes children being regularly picked up from school late.
14. If all attempts to improve a child's attendance have failed the matter may be scheduled for a School Attendance and Consultative Group Meeting, then a possible referral for Court action.
15. Children who are Looked After (LAC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN), will be known to the Headteacher and Child Welfare and Inclusion Officer and will be treated with the highest priority. Any unexplained absences will be followed up immediately. Strategies could include telephoning the parent/carer, a home visit, telephoning the Attendance Management Service (AMS) duty desk to request a same day home visit, contacting the Social Worker and in exceptional circumstances contacting the Police.

## **Working with the Attendance Management Team (Poor Attenders)**

1. Poor attenders are identified by the school during the weekly attendance trawl/fortnightly attendance trawl with Attendance Management Officer (AMO)
2. Parents will be contacted either by letter or phone call to outline concerns.
3. If no measurable improvement parent may be invited into school to meet with the School Designated Attendance Lead or a home visit may be made.
4. If no improvement, the school to make a request for support to the Attendance Management Team and notify parents.
5. If no improvement AMO will make a home visit to undertake an assessment and intervention plan within 8 working days of receipt of request. Cases will be reviewed initially for 6 weeks by AMO, school and family. Cases that require additional intervention plans will be jointly worked by the AMO, School and family for a further 6, 12 or 18 week review period.
6. If still no improvement AMO to issue an Official Warning Letter to parent/carer.
7. If no improvement made AMO will conduct an SACG (School Attendance Consultative Group meeting) with parent and designated attendance lead. Letter of outcomes to include clear action plan for parent and young person to comply with.
8. SACG may result in
  - a. No further action if attendance has shown improvement to an agreed level.
  - b. If attendance has shown improvement but not to an agreed level further monitoring period will be agreed.
  - c. If still no improvement or co-operation from parent/carer a referral to Court.
9. AMO to complete a Section 9 statement (signed by the Headteacher) and pass on to the Court Team.

## **Working with the Attendance Management Team (Non-Acceptance of School Place)**

1. Child is offered a school place at Manor Primary.
2. School telephone and write to family to request registration documents (birth certificate/passport and proof of address)
3. If parents/carers do not respond or refuse school place the details are passed to the school Designated Attendance Lead to follow-up.
4. Parent/carers are contacted by telephone in first instance and information is followed-up by letter.
5. If no response family home is visited
6. If no response a request is made to the Courts Officer to issue an Intention to send a School Attendance Order.
7. If no response is made with 15 days a request is made to the Courts Officer to issue a School Attendance Order.
8. If no response is made the school Designated Attendance Lead will complete a Section 9 statement (signed by the Headteacher) and pass on to the Court Team.

At any point the school designated attendance lead can request advice or support depending on the circumstances of each individual case.