Head Teacher: Elaine Spick

Attendance coordinator: Julie Davies (Deputy Head Teacher)

Attendance Officer: Debbie Webb

As a Rights Respecting school, at Poplar Primary we are committed to providing every one of our pupils with the best possible education, which will provide them with the educational and social skills which will equip them for life. We embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all.

Poplar aims to achieve good attendance - which includes punctuality - by operating an attendance policy within which the leadership team, staff, governors, pupils and parents can work in partnership. We endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

We closely monitor attendance and work to solve quickly any problems arising which affect attendance. The leadership team and staff encourage good attendance and punctuality and will liaise with families and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right. We work to ensure that our pupils and their families understand the correlation between regular, punctual attendance, and high achievement.

This attendance policy reflects current legislation and associated guidance. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance targets. The school will regularly review its systems for improving attendance.

We aim to:

• promote good attendance as the norm;
• help every child to reach their maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in their school life;
• demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school;
• establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

To achieve this:

• we help children to be aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality by class discussion and assembly talks.
• we monitor the attendance registers weekly and contact parents/carers whose children do not achieve 95% attendance without good cause;
• we arrange for all families requesting leave of absence exceeding 4 days to meet with the Head teacher or Deputy Head Teacher,
• we liaise with the local authority’s Education Welfare Officer;
• the Attendance Officer will talk to all families requesting leave of 1-4 days.

School Procedures

Absence
School responsibility.
Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as ‘authorised’, ‘unauthorised’ or ‘approved educational activity’. Only the Head teacher, Deputy Head Teacher (or a member of staff acting on their behalf) can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded as ‘no reason given’ and a phone call made to the parents/carers, followed by letter(s) if further enquiry is necessary. If however, no contact is made with the school over a period of time the matter will then be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer.

Parental/carer responsibility.
On the first day of absence parents should contact the school by telephone – or by email – before 9.30 to inform them why their child is unable to attend and how long they are expected to be absent. The school is then able to mark the register as either an authorised or unauthorised absence. The decision to authorise or un authorise absence rests with the school. For Safe Guarding reasons schools are required to know where all pupils are on a school day including absent children.

If absent due to illness, parents need to contact the school again on the third day of illness, and every day subsequently.

Lateness
Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9:00am with lessons beginning at 9:05 am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as late and must report to the school office. Pupils who arrive late following an early morning appointment should bring evidence of this, e.g. an appointment card.

Registers close at 9:30 am.

Afternoon registration will be at 1.30pm.
Nursery afternoon registration 12.30pm

Ten Days’ Absence
Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 days in a term will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Education Welfare Officer. The school will detail the action taken.

Responsibilities

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:
- liaison with the Headteacher or Deputy Head Teacher;
- monthly liaison with the Education Welfare Officer;
- supporting staff in monitoring and dealing with problems;
- supporting families and individual children in sorting out any problems working against good attendance and in helping to set and achieve targets with regard to attendance;
- publicising facts and figures with regard to the school’s attendance record;
- filling in sickness absence in register;
- informing class teacher of absences;
- telephoning families to check on where children are;
- receiving phone calls;

The class teacher is responsible for:
- ensuring that the registers are completed accurately at the beginning of each session;
- ensuring that the office is aware of any added absence markers (e.g. if a note arrives establishing that reason for the absence);
- monitoring the attendance and patterns of absence of the children in their class;
- liaising with the Headteacher with regard to any concerns regarding attendance;
ensuring that the delivery of the curriculum is challenging, interesting and stimulating so that children want to attend regularly; ensuring that the ethos in the class and the school is supportive of good attendance.

The family is responsible for:

- making sure their children attend regularly and punctually unless prevented by illness or medical appointment;
- letting the school know as soon as possible why a child is away;
- talking to the school as soon as possible about any child’s reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with;
- completing a request for leave of absence in accordance with that policy

Frequent Absence

Registers are monitored regularly by the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer to identify any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem, depending on severity, using strategies such as:

- Headteacher talking to parent/child
- A letter from the Headteacher
- A meeting with the class teacher/Inclusion manager/Headteacher
- A referral to the Education Welfare Officer
- A referral to School Network meeting

The school may request medical evidence when a child is ill and provide parents with guidance on acceptable examples of medical evidence for all future illness absences. The school will also refer the child to the School Nurse or the Specialist Nurse in the Education Welfare Service if there is a high level of absence for medical reasons. If medical evidence (as requested) is not provided, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

A high level of unauthorised absence will result in a referral to the Education Welfare Officer who will issue a Penalty Notice warning. A monitoring period will then follow, and if attendance does not improve within the monitoring period, a Penalty Notice may be issued which carries a fine of £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

For pupils with appropriately evidenced illness, the school will follow appropriate protocols to offer support.

A Welcome Back

On return from absence pupils are made to feel welcome. This will include a discussion about the best way for the child to catch up on missed work, where appropriate, and be brought up to date on any information they will have missed in their absence.

Absence notes

The school will retain notes from parents explaining absence as per current protocol/legislation.

Promoting/improving attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive the fullest possible education, for which regular and punctual attendance is essential, for example in the New Parents’ Pack, through the Friday Flyer and on the school’s website.
Leave of absence

In accordance with the above, and with legislation, there is no right to take pupils out of school during term time, other than in exceptional circumstances, and in compliance with the school’s Absence and Exceptional Leave Policy (Appendix A).

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. Progress towards these targets will be analysed regularly by a member of the leadership team and notified to the governing body. Strategies adopted in line with this policy will be implemented to achieve or exceed the target. It is the responsibility of the parents, staff, governors and pupils at Poplar Primary School to ensure good attendance and achievement of targets.

Our schools targets are:

2019-2020: 96%

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes. Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three years.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid).

Register Security

The registers are digital, and back up registers are safely stored. Registers are kept in the school office unless being delivered to the classrooms by the appointed register monitors.

Review

This policy is due for review in September 2020 or in line with legislative changes.
Request for Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances during Term Time

It is not advisable to take your child/ren on a leave of absence during term time as this causes disruption to their education. Schools must follow the law in this regard and may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances if certain criteria are fulfilled.

The Pupil Registration Regulations (England) 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- **Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances is authorised at the discretion of the Head teacher.** *(This is not an automatic right of parents/guardians)*
- You should not normally take your child(ren) on a leave of absence during the school term.
- **Please do not book your leave of absence until authority is given.**
- Each request for leave of absence will be considered individually, taking into account: the circumstances for the request, the supporting evidence provided, the overall attendance of your child(ren), your child’s stage of education and progress and where appropriate both internal and external examinations and assessments.
- If the absence is approved by the Head Teacher you will be advised as to how many days the Head teacher has approved for your child’s absence.
- If the school does not agree the absence and you take the leave without permission or your child is absent for more than the agreed number of days the absence will be unauthorised.
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of the school may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of statutory action and a fine.

In order for your application for absence to be considered, please complete below:

**Name(s) of Child(ren):**

**Form(s)/Year:**

**Home address:**

**Dates of absence: From:**

**To:**

**Total Days:**

**Reason for request (additional evidence may be required):**

**Signed: Parent/Guardian**
On this occasion we have carefully considered your application and have **agreed** to authorise the absence. It is important that your child(ren) returns to school on the agreed date.

The school has considered your application carefully but is **unable to authorise** your child’s absence. The following is advice from the DFE (Department of Education), we can only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances even if your child’s attendance is over 95%. If we do not authorise your request and you still proceed with the absence, this will be an unauthorised absence and may lead to your child(ren) being referred to the Education Welfare Service and the possibility of statutory action and a fine.

Signed:……………………………………………… Position:……………………………………

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

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<thead>
<tr>
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Poplar Primary School

ABSENCE AND EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE POLICY

The leadership team, staff and Governors of Poplar School believe that taking children out of school during term time should be avoided where possible. Missing school can have a damaging effect on a pupil’s education and overall achievement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Amendment Regulations 2013 state 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.

In accordance with the Regulations the school policy is as follows:

1. Parents must request leave for exceptional circumstances as far in advance of the event as possible.

2. The request should be made in writing using a Leave of Absence form (available from the school office). Verbal requests will be recorded in writing.

3. This must include the reason why you feel that it is necessary to take a leave of absence, detailing any extenuating or compassionate reasons, and providing evidence of circumstances, for example a medical certificate or letter from employers.
On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with supporting documentation, the Headteacher will give consideration to the request and you will be informed by letter of the school’s decision within 7 days.

The unauthorised absence can attract the issue by the London Borough of Merton of a Penalty Notice (with a current fine of £120).