

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Montpelier Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, enabling them to have access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

This policy applies to all children registered at Montpelier. It is available to all parents/carers on our school website and by hard copy on request.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

The school works together with other professionals and agencies e.g. the School Attendance Officer to support and develop good habits

Children who are absent from school, frequently fall behind and develop large gaps in their learning which impacts on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Aims

To maintain an attendance rate of a minimum of 96%

To maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance

To maintain good time keeping

Good attendance is important because:

Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance

Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically

Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with

Regular attenders find learning more satisfying

Regular attenders settle into High school more easily

Please note there is a direct link between good attendance and achievement at school.

% Attendance during a school year	Equivalent number of days absent	Equivalent number of weeks absent	Number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

Parents/Carers should:

- Ensure your child attends school regularly. Absence should only happen when your child is significantly ill, there should be a symptom, feeling unwell is not enough.
- Telephone on the first morning of any absence on the absence line by 8.30am informing us of the reason and tell us when the child is likely to return to school.
- Make all non-emergency medical appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Email confirming the reason for your child's absence when s/he returns to school.
- Provide medical verification where illness-absence is frequent or prolonged.
- Keep us updated by telephone or email daily if your child has any extended period of absence.
- Ensure we have your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers, child minders and emergency contact details.
- Tell us if there is a change in your circumstances, if you are leaving the area or changing schools. Making sure we always have your current contact numbers; this includes all telephone numbers and emergency or other contact details.

The school will:

- Follow up unexplained absence by phone calls and letters as necessary.
- Remind parents/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality via newsletters and parent handbooks.
- Inform parents/carers of any concerns regarding attendance and punctuality by individual emails and one to one meetings with a member of senior staff.
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance and punctuality. Children with 90% attendance or less, whatever the reason for the absence are classified as persistent absentees. If we have concerns we will discuss these with you and may also make a referral to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance and punctuality issues.

Please remember that absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his/her learning. A good understanding of learning and good progress can only take place when the child is in the classroom regularly and on time. We realise that there are rare, unavoidable occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as “authorised absences”. For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

Unauthorised Absence

Where there is no explanation for an absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory the school will not be able to authorise the absences. These are known as “unauthorised absences”

A child’s unauthorised absences are an offence for the parent. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting for a delivery
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child’s birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Unapproved holidays in term time
- Where frequent absence claimed as illness and is unsupported by medical evidence, where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

If a child’s absence is reported as illness in the week prior to the end of term and/ or at the start of term the school may require medical evidence in order to authorise the absence.

Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service inspects our registers and may contact you where unauthorised absence continues to be a problem. They will consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Unauthorised absence could result in a Fixed Penalty Fine or other legal action.

Leave of absence in term time.

Amendments to the 2006 attendance regulations make it clear that Head teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time for Holidays. An application can be made if there are exceptional (*and documented*) circumstances. Parents sometimes confuse telling the school as being good enough, this is not so, you will need explicit permission from the school for any leave.

- Please ask the school office for a form; the head teacher will consider your request and advise you of his/her decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss) taking further time than allowed will be unauthorised and you risk your child being taken off the school roll. Approval cannot be given without application or retrospectively.
- If a child is not present at the beginning of a school term, we cannot guarantee that a place will remain available on their return to school. You should make definite arrangements so



Montpelier Primary School

that you return in good time. If you experience delays in returning from a trip within the UK or abroad for whatever reason, (although parent usually claim illness) the school will require documentary evidence in English or translated) accompanied with proof of original return dates, i.e. tickets or travel documentation.

- If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and you may be liable for a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action and in certain instances the child may also lose their school place.
- Even in exceptional circumstances parents of pupils in year 2 and year 6 should consider alternative arrangements to avoid disruption during these statutory test years
- **The school will take into account the government's PREVENT strategy when considering requests for leave and it may be necessary to seek advice in this regard**

Punctuality

- It is important to be on time as the first part of the school day is used to give out instructions, set or group children or organise schoolwork for the rest of that day. It is also a time for children to settle down by reading or another quiet activity so they are ready for lessons immediately after registration.
- Morning registration is at 8.55am. This is the time the children must be in the line in the playground. You need to ensure your child is coming through the school gate by latest 8.45am. The pre-school session from 8.40-8.50am gives children and parents an opportunity to socialise and for the children to gain a deeper sense of community and belonging.
- Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. **We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.**
- Arrival (particularly if the lateness is frequent/persistent) after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with the DfE guidance; this is effectively an absence.
- All lateness is recorded daily. The number of minutes late and the reason for lateness if known will also be recorded. This information may be referred to the schools local authority attendance officer and can be made available to the courts in the form of a report should a prosecution be the outcome of repeated lateness.

Some children/classes will be re-grouped for targeted learning/catch up. The curriculum is designed to be progressive, new topics are often introduced at the start of the week and the majority of teaching takes place during the morning. (Each day's learning builds on the day before.)

Collection from School

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day or from any after school activity. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and to share concerns with other agencies including the Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service (formally Social Services). The school will place a child into the after school club and the parent/carer will be charged the full amount for the first hour. Beyond



Montpelier Primary School

this, children may be referred to Ealing Police Station or Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service in the event that a suitable arrangement cannot be made with the parent/carer.

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than to go to High School) parents are asked to give the school comprehensive information; about their new address, plans, including any date of a move, telephone numbers, the child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. If you are not sure of the details of your move, please let us know as soon as possible, but please fill in the leaving school form as fully as you can before you leave.

When pupils leave and we do not have information, about where they have gone, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing Education'. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Ealing Children's Integrated Response Service the Police and other agencies, to try and locate your child. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the DfE and the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if these absences continue.

We value your support in helping us to maintain the high standards to which we always aspire.

"Every day counts and Every Child Matters!"

Attendance Procedure 2016/2017

Aim

To monitor and eradicate poor pupil attendance at school by analysing attendance on a daily basis following the procedure below.

Administrator to run a report of pupils whose attendance is below 90% half termly. Parents/carers will be contacted by letter (attached) with a copy of the pupil's registration sheet.

- Administrator to monitor the attendance for a further 2 week period. If there has been no improvement, then a meeting will be arranged for parents with a member of SLT.
- Administrator to monitor the attendance for a further 2 week. If there has been no improvement then a referral will be made to the LA School Attendance Officer who will send out a letter to parents.
- Administrator to monitor the attendance over a further 2 weeks. If there has been no improvement then a second referral will be made to the LA School Attendance Officer who will arrange a meeting with the parents.

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Following a recent attendance review throughout the school it has been noted that «forename»'s attendance is «percentage_attendance»%

The minimum attendance target set by the school is 96.2%, as you will see from the enclosed registration certificate; «forename»'s attendance falls below this target and is currently one of the lowest in the school.

Although «forename»'s absence may be due to illness, authorised absence or unavoidable circumstances, pupils who fall to 90% attendance or below are monitored by the Local Authority's School Attendance Service. The DFE are now classifying any child whose attendance that drops to 90% as a persistent absentee.

We will continue to monitor «chosen_forename»'s attendance. If absence continues to be a concern you will be contacted by the School Attendance Service Link Education Social Worker.

Please note there is a direct link between good attendance and achievement at school.

% Attendance during a school year	Equivalent number of days absent	Equivalent number of weeks absent	Number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

Yours sincerely

Ms E Glanz
Head of School
Enc.

Cc: Elizabeth Kovacs– Link Attendance Officer – London

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The minimum attendance target set by the school is 96.2%, as you will see from the enclosed registration certificate; «forename»'s attendance falls below this target and is currently one of the lowest in the school.

Although «forename»'s absence has been due to illness, pupils who fall to 90% attendance or below are monitored by the Local Authority's School Attendance Service. The DFE are now classifying any child whose attendance that drops to 90% as a persistent absentee. From this point, we require medical evidence in order to authorise any further absences due to illness.

We will continue to monitor «chosen_forename»'s attendance. If absence continues to be a concern you will be contacted by the School Attendance Service Link Education Social Worker.

Please note there is a direct link between good attendance and achievement at school.

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Yours sincerely

Ms E Glanz
Head of School
Enc.

Cc: Elizabeth Kovacs– Link Attendance Officer – London

Appendix 2

Punctuality Procedure 2016/2017

Aim

To monitor and eradicate late arrival to school by analysing pupil's punctuality on a daily basis.

Pupils will be monitored throughout the academic year. Parents/carers will be contacted by letter on each occasion until they reach a limit of eight lates, when they will be invited into school for a meeting with a member the SLT. Letters will be sent out via school comms and logged onto the pupil's SIMS file. If a child arrives after 9.30am this will be marked as late after registration and will equate to a morning session absence.

- Administrator to run a report in SIMS each afternoon. Details to be recorded on pupil punctuality spreadsheet for monitoring and analysis.
- Letter 1 & 2 (Please see attached) to be sent daily on the initial 2 occasions. Class teacher to speak to parent at the end of the school day in the playground regarding punctuality or to contact the parent by telephone if they have not had the opportunity to speak with them in person.
- Letter 3, 4 & 5 (Please see attached) to be sent on the next 3 occasions.
- Letter 6 (Please see attached) to be sent on the sixth occasion.
- Letter 7 (Please see attached) to be sent on the seventh occasion
- On the eighth occasion an appointment to be made for parent/carer to have a formal meeting with a member of SLT.
- Administrator to monitor for improvement over 2 weeks.
- If no improvement a referral is made to LA School Attendance Officer who will contact the parent to discuss.
- Administrator to monitor for a further 2 weeks and if punctuality has not improved a meeting will be arranged with parent/carer and LA School Attendance Officer.
- LA School Attendance Officer to assess and advise when we school should change mark to (u) late and equating to a session absence in order to lead to a penalty fine to parent.

Letter 1

Dear Parent / Carer

The school places great importance upon punctuality as it is a positive habit that should be formed as early as possible.

Unfortunately, \$Forename\$ arrived late to school today. I very much hope you will support us by ensuring your child arrives at school by **8.45am** every day.

If your child attended a medical appointment or an arrangement regarding late arrival was previously agreed with the school, please ignore this letter.

Thank you for supporting the school and your child's learning.

Yours sincerely
Ms E Glanz
Head of School

Letter 2

Dear Parent / Carer

The school places great importance upon punctuality as it is a positive habit that should be formed as early as possible.

Unfortunately, \$Forename\$ arrived late to school today. This year we are sending reminders to parents and carers every time a child is late because of the negative impact it has upon learning. I very much hope you will support us by ensuring your child arrives at school by **8.45am** every day.

If your child attended a medical appointment or an arrangement regarding late arrival was previously agreed with the school, please ignore this letter.

Thank you for supporting the school and your child's learning.

Yours sincerely
Ms E Glanz
Head of School

Letter 3, 4 & 5

Dear Parent / Carer

The school places great importance upon punctuality as it is a positive habit that should be formed as early as possible.

Unfortunately, your child has arrived late to school this week causing **disruption to the lesson** – and to their classmates' learning – this is an unacceptable way to start the day. This year we are sending reminders to parents and carers every time a child is late because of the negative impact



Montpelier Primary School

it has upon lessons. If lateness is persistent the school will arrange to meet parents more formally and, in some cases, this may involve a referral to the education social work service.

I very much hope you will support us by ensuring your child arrives at school by **8.45am** every day. If your child attended a medical appointment or an arrangement regarding late arrival was previously agreed with the school, please ignore this letter.

Thank you for supporting the school and your child's learning.

Yours sincerely

Ms E Glanz

Head of School

Letter 6

Dear Parent / Carer

Unfortunately, xxxxx has now arrived late at school on six occasions causing **disruption to their lesson** – and to their classmates' learning – this is an unacceptable way to start the day.

If lateness is persistent the school will arrange to meet parents more formally and, in some cases, this may involve a referral to the education social work service.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school by **8.45am** every day.

Thank you for supporting the school and your child's learning.

Yours sincerely

Ms E Glanz

Head of School

Letter 7

Dear Parent / Carer

It has been brought to my attention that despite several reminders, your child continues to be late for school. The disruption to learning is now raising a cause for concern. Please ensure that you address the issue of your child's punctuality as a priority to avoid any further action.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Ms E Glanz

Head of School

Letter 8

Dear Parent / Carer

Following several reminders about the importance of children attending school on time we have recorded that \$Forename\$ arrived late again today.

I am concerned that this may become an ongoing issue, so I have made an appointment at 9.00am on Wednesday xxxx to discuss the matter with you. If you are unable to make this appointment please contact the school office to arrange an alternative time.

Yours sincerely

Ms E Glanz

Head of School