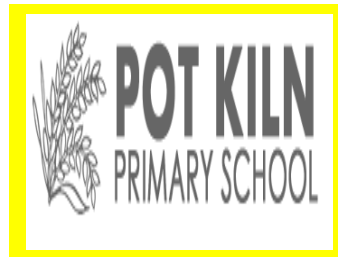


Pot Kiln Primary School

Attendance policy



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Last reviewed on: August 2023

Next review due by: August 2024

1/. Aims

This policy aims to clarify everyone's part in providing an education of the highest quality for all our students, which can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all.

We will also support parents, carers and guardians (henceforth referred to as parents in this policy) to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Scope

The whole school community – students, parents, carers and guardians, teaching, support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play.

Covid 19 related absence is an absence. It is now recorded no differently to other authorized absence however.

3. Procedure

Registering

Pot Kiln Primary School is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom staff are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the codes detailed at the end of this document. The register will be called at the start of each session (morning and afternoon) and will close 10 minutes after. Any child not present at this time will be recorded as 'L' meaning late.

Children who arrive, in the morning, 20 minutes after the register closes, will be marked as a 'U'. This absence will be categorised as an 'unauthorised absence' unless leave has been authorised by the school in advance or where a reason for absence is known and is accepted by the school as a legitimate reason for absence. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.

Students are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Students who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the student to be late.

In the event that a pupil arrives late, or leaves early (where the register has not yet closed) the pupil should report to the office and the register will be updated.

First-day calling

Parents, carers and guardians will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent where no explanation for the absence has been received. This phone call will be made by 9:30am where possible. The system helps to identify at an early stage, pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents', carers' or guardians' knowledge.

Where it is not possible to make direct contact with Parents, carers and guardians, a message will be left on the Parents', carers' and guardians' telephone(s) and/or a text message sent.

If contact has not been made with the Parents, carers and guardians by 12.00 am the following day, or earlier if there are reasons for concern, school may attempt to contact other people on the child's contact list, visit the family home or contact known family friends to ensure the safeguarding of the children.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence or where staff are particularly concerned, the school will contact parents and carers to notify them of their concerns. A meeting may then be arranged to discuss the reasons for the absences. At the meeting plans will be put in place with the parents, carers, guardians and the pupil to resolve any difficulties, to provide appropriate support and to improve the attendance within a specified time frame. This would usually be no more than 4 weeks and will be recorded for future referral. It will be explained to parents and carers that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Parents will be issued Annex A on an annual basis and this will be referred to at any meetings which it is appropriate to support better attendance.

Parents may be asked to take part in surveys to support better attendance.

Lateness

Where a child regularly arrives late, a letter will be sent to the parents, guardians or carers to prompt timely arrival at school. These letters will be issued based on the number of either L marks (children arriving late before the closure of the register) or U marks (children arriving late after the register closes).

On track to be Persistently absent (OTPA):

Pupils who have an attendance rate of between 91% and 95% are in the category of 'On Track' to be persistently absent. These pupils are tracked by the school and plans may be implemented with families to support attendance to school. This may also include a request for medical evidence to support any absences due to illness. In the event that this evidence is not provided, absences recorded as authorised due to illness, may be amended to an unauthorised absence. If attendance does

not improve, a second meeting may be held with the head teacher and the attendance lead. During this meeting parents, carers or guardians will be advised of their legal responsibilities towards education and their child. However, the school will continue to offer support to help with the promotion of good attendance. The child's attendance will then be monitored closely and without significant improvements a fixed penalty fine may be issued.

Persistent Absence

Absences of pupils who have an attendance rate of 90% or below, will be monitored closely and a letter will be sent to inform parents, carers and guardians of this. Absence below 90% is called persistent absence. If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all) the matter may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). Both OPA and PA meeting will be recorded via an action plan and/or email. Where appropriate, parent's carers or guardians, will be requested to sign to indicate they agree with the representation of the meeting and the record. If a parent is not present for the meeting, an email will be sent with an explanation of the agreements made and a verbal confirmation be requested. If no feedback is provided by the parents, carers or guardians, it will be assumed that the record of the meeting is accurate and agreed.

Fixed Penalty Notice

In the event of absences remaining unauthorised, Pot Kiln, in conjunction with the EWO, may issue a fixed penalty notice of £60 per child to each parent. The fine may be considered after a period of 8 sessions (4 days) of unauthorised absence.

4. Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances: -

(a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance – a pupil is to be educated off site, for example to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority, a pupil is participating in an educational trip or visit authorised by the school, a pupil is involved in an exceptional special event/occasion and permission has been granted by the Headteacher in advance. In authorising such an absence, the individual circumstances of the particular case as well as the pupil's attendance, attainment, and ability to catch up on missed schooling will also be considered.

(b) in other exceptional circumstances, where permission has been granted by the Headteacher for absence and where the parents/carers with whom the child normally resides have sought permission in advance. In authorising such an absence, the individual circumstances of the particular case as well as the pupil's

attendance, attainment, and ability to catch up on missed schooling will also be considered.

(c) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

(d) where the pupil has a medical appointment and proof of the appointment can be presented (although parents/carers should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand);

(e) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;

(f) where the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong;

(g) where the Local Authority have a duty to make travel arrangements for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty;

(h) where the pupil is of no fixed abode, their parent/carer is engaged in a trade which required them to travel, the pupil has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;

(i) where the pupil has been excluded from the school and no alternative provision has been made;

(j) in other very exceptional circumstances where a request could not have been made in advance (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a very limited period.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be: -

- no explanation has been given by the parent/carer/guardian
- the child has lower than 90% attendance and parent/carer/guardian has reported the child as ill but no medical evidence was provided;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;

- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent/carer/guardian is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

5. Responsibilities

Parents' / Carers'/Guardians' Responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Pot Kiln. It is all parents' responsibility to read Annex A and adhere to it for their children's attendance.

Pot Kiln Primary School expects parents / carers /guardians will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence,
- and not condone unjustified absence from school.
 - Use the correct form to request term-time absence for exceptional reasons only. The Headteacher will only authorize requests when the requests are supported by written evidence. Exceptional circumstances are defined by the government and the school abides by these definitions.
 - Term-time absence is not a right nor does the school allow absence due to the cost of the school holiday-based vacations.

Parents/carers/guardians will also be expected to:

- notify the School on the first day of absence by telephone;
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. Pot Kiln will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

Staff Responsibilities

Take a register at the beginning of every session to record absence and lateness. Staff must complete their register within the first ten minutes of the session.

The teacher will inform SLT of any unaccounted-for absence immediately so that a premises check can be completed to ensure the well-being of the missing student.

The School will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receives sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

Governors' Responsibilities

The governing body must make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at the school.

6. Collection and Analysis of Data

The Attendance lead will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the Senior Leadership Team and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

Attendance is monitored by year group, class, and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, students with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

7. Reporting

The agreed governing sub-committee (Educational Outcomes Committee) is charged with reviewing and scrutinising the current absence reporting. The sub-committee reports to the full governing body.

Registration Codes:

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. child attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded/Suspended (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 (up to 10 min after the register closes)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence for that session (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 10 min of the register closing)	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	Child not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to children	Not counted in possible attendances

APPENDIX A

Attendance – A Guide For Parents/Carers and Guardians

1. WHEN DOES MY CHILD NEED TO BE IN SCHOOL?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.30 am**.

2. WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS LATE?

Registration finishes at **8:50 am** in the morning.

If your child arrives between **8.40 am** and **8:50 am** he/she will be marked **late**.

If your child arrives after **8:50 am** he/she will be marked **absent**.

Students who arrive after registration should sign in at the office.

Students arriving late must enter the site via the school reception.

3. DOES THE SCHOOL NEED LETTERS EXPLAINING MY CHILD'S ABSENCE OR WILL A PHONE CALL DO?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

4. WHAT REASONS WILL THE SCHOOL ACCEPT FOR ABSENCES?

- Illness
- Emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical communication.

5. WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters, etc.

6. WILL THE SCHOOL CONTACT ME IF MY CHILD IS ABSENT?

The school operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality, we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

7. WHAT CAN I DO TO ENCOURAGE MY CHILD TO ATTEND SCHOOL?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that s/he leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

8. MY CHILD IS TRYING TO AVOID COMING TO SCHOOL. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Contact the school immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer or the school may work with you using other external agencies such as O & M Health & Wellbeing. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise.