



## PINNER PARK JUNIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Information for Parents

***“Attendance matters...”***



**Article 29** – Education should develop children’s talents, ability and personality. It should help them develop respect for others.

*Pinner Park Junior School* promotes good school attendance and punctuality for every child. Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. School attendance is also a component of safeguarding children.

#### **As a school we aim to:**

- Aim for an attendance rate of a ***minimum*** of 97%
- Maintain parents’ and pupils’ awareness of the importance of regular attendance

#### **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 and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to high school

#### **As a parent you can help us by:**

- Ringing or texting on the first morning of all absences (by 9:30am) with the reasons and saying when the child will return to school
- Arranging dental and doctor’s appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Keeping us updated by telephone, email or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

#### **We shall:**

- Follow up unexplained absences by a phone call on the first day of unexplained absence
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school brochure and the Home-School agreement
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Publish your child’s attendance rate on her/his annual school reports
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child’s attendance
- Monitor children’s attendance and if necessary meet with parents/ carers where there are concerns
- Report attendance figures each term to the Governing Body

September 2016

To be reviewed September 2017

## Poor Attendance

- Parents will be informed of their child's low attendance level and invited to discuss their child's attendance when:
  - A child continues to be absent for more than seven days without explanation.
  - A child is absent for seven school days or more with an unsatisfactory explanation.
  - A child's attendance drops below 90% for no specific medical or other acceptable reason. (persistent absence is 20% or below)
- Where a pattern of unauthorised absence persists or attendance does not improve, despite the school's involvement, the Early Intervention Service will be contacted and asked to visit the home.

## 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.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problems that causes you child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

## Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Parent appointments
- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Picking someone up from the airport
- Unapproved holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reasons for the absence is considered unsatisfactory

Unauthorised absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Officer may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

## Punctuality

- Morning registration is at 8:55am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom. Pupils may enter school from 8:45am
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. 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 after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DfE guidance

September 2016

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- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality

## **Term Time Leave of Absence**

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absences are only allowed at the discretion of the Headteacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the school governors.

It is our policy:

- That only in **exceptional** circumstances will leave of absence be authorised whether for holidays or any other reason. Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it due to exceptional circumstances, taking into account the nature of the event for which leave is sought, the frequency of the request, whether the parent gave advance notice, the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form in advance. Please ask the school office for a form or this can be downloaded from the school website; the Headteacher will consider your request and advise you of her decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss). Further time than allowed will be unauthorised and you risk *your* child being taken off the school roll
- Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a fixed penalty notice. If a fixed penalty notice is issued a separate notice would be issued to each parent for the child. As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 the rate per parent per child will be £60 if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days
- A guide for parents regarding penalty notices issued by Harrow Council is available to view on the school website

Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

## **Leavers**

If your child is leaving **other than at the end of Year 6** to go to High School, parents are required by DfE legislation to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known and reasons for moving, who the child will be living with (sometimes this can be a relative)
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

## **Children Missing Education**

When pupils leave and you have not given us the required information and we cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. The school is legally required to make a referral to Harrow Childrens' Services as the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Childrens' Services (formerly Social Services), the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

## **Governors**

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. The schools attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

### **Legal Enforcement by Harrow Local Authority**

As part of promoting good attendance and punctuality Harrow Local Authority will use its legal powers to enforce school attendance where this becomes problematic, including powers to prosecute parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order (Section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or failure to ensure their child's regular attendance at school (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Schools should authorise absences only in exceptional circumstances. Where there has been a relevant period of unauthorised absences (10 consecutive sessions or 20 sessions in 12 weeks), the child's overall attendance for the past rolling 12 months must be considered. If this overall attendance is over 90%, it will not be possible to issue an education penalty notice at this time.

Where there has been a relevant level of unauthorised absences and the child's overall attendance is less than 90%, it will need to be considered whether the child's absence during the past rolling 12 months have been authorised or unauthorised before deciding to issue an education penalty notice.

We value your support in helping us to maintain very high standards.

***"Every day counts..."***

**Ratified by Governing Body**

**Chair of Governing Body** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_