

Dr South's CE(A) Primary School

Bletchington Road, Islip, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2TQ

Faith, Hope and Love

Headteacher: Mr Huw Morgan

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Attendance Policy (non-statutory)

The Governors at Dr South's Primary School adopt the attached Absence Policy.

Adopted (as Absence Policy) by the Full Governing Body in May 2012.

Reviewed (as Absence Policy) by the Full Governing Body in July 2013.

Reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee (to take account of the Pupil Registration Regulations 2013 and renamed Attendance Policy) in November 2013

Reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee in May 2015

Reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee in September 2017

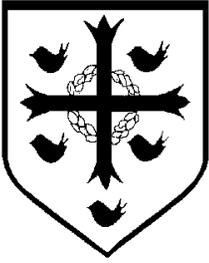
Signed Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee

Signed Headteacher

Review Date: July 2019

Review every two years

Delegated to the Teaching and Learning Committee



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Introduction

We at Dr South's CE Primary School believe that good attendance at school is in a child's best interest, and only rarely should a child need to be absent. Possible reasons for absence include illness, medical appointments which cannot be scheduled for times out of school, visits to other schools before transfer, musical exams, weddings, bereavement or trauma. In these circumstances, the headteacher is the designated person to authorise the absence.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013

Amendments have been made to the 2013 regulations in the form of guidance issued November 2016. This policy takes the guidance into account.

It is recognised that families need to spend time together, and sometimes may wish to take exceptional leave of absence during school time. The most likely reasons for requesting this are because a parent has restricted holiday time, although other reasons will be considered. Factors which will be taken into account when considering requests will include:

- The child's overall attendance pattern
- Holidays already taken
- The child's stage of education
- The ability of the child to catch up on the work they have missed
- Time and duration of the holiday
- Proximity to national assessments in years F1, 2 and 6
- The reasons for taking holiday in term-time
- Whether the holiday is in the child's best interest

The Governing Body does not delegate this decision to the headteacher.

Procedure

If a family wish to take exceptional leave of absence during term-time, an Absence Request Form should be requested from the school office, completed, and returned at least eight weeks prior to the absence.

An ad-hoc panel of three governors (chosen by the headteacher) will meet to consider the request, and the family will be invited, but not required, to attend the discussion. After the discussion, the panel will write to the family to let them know the outcome. To avoid potentially difficult situations, no governor who has a child at the school will be eligible to serve on the panel.

Information for parents

- Absence can seriously disrupt a child's continuity of learning.
- Absence can result in gaps in a pupil's learning.
- Absence can cause disruption to friendship groups.
- Absence should always be avoided at the beginning of a new school term.
- Absence should always be avoided close to examinations or tests.
- Absence should always be avoided during the first year at a new school.
- Absence should always be avoided during the Reception Year.

- It is recommended that parents wait for confirmation that exceptional leave of absence has been granted prior to making any definite arrangements.
- Pupils who attend school regularly perform better in their SATs and achieve higher grades at GCSE.
- Pupils who take 10 days' holiday during term-time can achieve only a maximum attendance of 94.7%, even if there are no other absences through the year.
- Research suggests that children who are taken out of school during term-time may never catch up on work missed.
- Taking a school child on holiday in term-time may give them the unspoken message that it is acceptable to be absent from school during term-time.

Holidays In Term Time - Removing Pupils From Roll

If a pupil does not return to school after an authorised or unauthorised holiday of 10 or more school days, government guidance states that the school must check that the pupil has a "good reason" for their continued absence. Examples of good reasons are given as disrupted travel arrangements or illness. The Head Teacher will decide whether the illness of someone other than the pupil is relevant. If parents do not voluntarily contact the school to supply a "good reason" for a pupil's continued absence the school will attempt to make contact with the parents using the contact details supplied on the holiday consent form or in the school's general records. It is recommended that within three days of the pupil's expected date of return, the school should attempt to communicate with the parents either in writing or through a telephone conversation, which is noted.

The following issues should be dealt with in the school's communication with the parents:

- The date the school expected the pupil to return.
- The parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that the pupil attends school regularly.
- The reason why the pupil did not return on the expected date.
- The possibility of legal sanctions against the parents.
- The possibility of the school deleting the pupil from the school roll following a further 7 school days of absence.
- The fact that the pupil must be marked as unauthorised absence if there is no "good reason" for the pupil's continued absence.

If parents/carers either voluntarily or following communication from the school supply the school with a "good reason" for the pupil's continued absence the pupil can be marked authorised absence whilst this reason continues.

If parents/carers respond to communication from the school but do not supply a "good reason" for the pupil's continuing absence but the school is aware of the whereabouts of the pupil he/she can be taken off roll 10 school days or more after the date the pupil was expected to return to school.

If after reasonable enquiries by the school the pupil cannot be located or the school has welfare concerns over the pupil the Local Authority (Education Welfare Officer) will be contacted and the Education Welfare Service will carry out Local Authority checks and advise on future steps.

Low Attendance

Parents are encouraged to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time. Checks are to be made weekly to identify children with low attendance rates. The following procedure should normally be followed after the October holiday if there are concerns about attendance, for example, low attendance in previous years (c95%):

When attendance drops below 95% - Letter A sent with a copy of the attendance certificate.

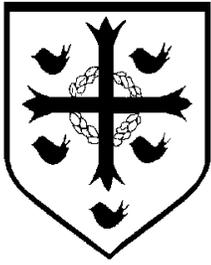
When attendance drops below 90% - Letter B sent and a meeting requested

If there is no improvement, the local Authority Attendance and engagement team should be consulted with a view to agreeing a parental contract.

The weekly attendance list is to be annotated with any action taking, and reasons given if the above procedure not followed.

Guidance

The Local Authority Attendance and Engagement Team has provided an information leaflet entitled Penalty Notice, which gives guidance on how a school should deal with unauthorised absences and lateness. The Governing Body believes that it is usually appropriate to follow this guidance. This includes the issue of Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence.



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2017

Dear

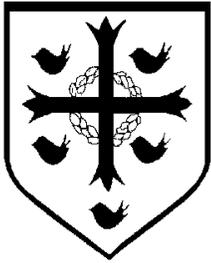
I notice from our records that X's attendance has dropped below 95% and his/her attendance last year was . We are encouraged by the Government to follow up when attendance drops as there is clear evidence that eventual attainment at school is linked to attendance patterns. I enclose a copy of the registration certificate for your information.

If you envisage there being further problems with your child's attendance, I would be grateful if you would arrange an appointment with the class teacher to discuss how best to ensure that learning continues during any absence.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Morgan
Headteacher

LETTER B



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2017

Dear Parents,

I am writing as X's attendance has dropped below 90%. This is the same as missing more than a day every fortnight. I enclose a copy of the registration certificate for information.

I understand that there are many reasons why a child is absent, so feel it would be useful to get together to discuss this. I would be grateful if you would contact me to arrange a time to meet.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Morgan
Headteacher