

Presdales School



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Enquiries & comments

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Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential pre-requisite to effective learning. The school consequently encourages and promotes good attendance. The school monitors students' attendance with the assistance of the School's Attendance Officer and encourages good attendance in its publicity, its conversations with students, letters to parents, Parents information evenings, a system of certificates and Reward points for 100% attendance or much improved attendance.

The law requires that parents must ensure that their child regularly attends the school where he or she is registered. If parents do not do this, Hertfordshire County Council may start legal proceedings against them, which includes the use of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Students and parents should therefore aim for 100% attendance and avoid planning holidays or other non-essential activities in school time. Only in exceptional circumstances can a holiday be authorised, and after consultation with the Head Teacher (see below).

Students who find it difficult to attend may be those who:

- are new to the area
- start school midway through a year
- have recently missed a lot of school through illness
- whose siblings were poor attenders
- whose attainment levels in school are poor
- who are teased/bullied
- who are disruptive
- who have previously been excluded
- who have parents in financial difficulties
- have recently separated parents

The school supports students who find it difficult to attend, in many ways by:

- Forging and maintaining strong links with parents
- Meeting with parents/carers/student to discuss the emerging issue
- Offering the student the opportunity to change form/ teaching group/set(if timetable allows)
- Allowing the student to return on a part time table, agreed with the parent/ carer and student
- Referring to the Mental Health Support Team or School Counsellor
- Referring to ESMA (for home tutoring) if the student has been absent for medical reasons

Regular attendance

It is important that students arrive at school on time. This helps them learn good time-keeping and reduces the chance of classroom disruption.

Registration

- Regulations are in force, which require schools to differentiate in registers between authorised and unauthorised absence and to publish annually in prospectuses and Trustee's reports their statistics on all absences.
- It will be important that registration is given a high priority and that it takes place promptly at 8.40am and at 1.45pm.

- An email/ phone message must be left for the Schools attendance officer on each day of absence, so the absence can be coded appropriately.
- If students are going out during the morning/afternoon session, they should have written permission from a parent/ carer this can be via email. This information will be entered onto Sims. The student should then go to Main Reception and then sign out when their parent/ carer has arrived into reception to collect them.
- Any students in Years 7 – 13 arriving late (i.e. after 8.40am, irrespective of whether before or after 9.30am) twice in one week or four times in a month should receive an after school detention. Persistent lateness will result in parents/carers being invited into school for meeting with the Attendance officer to discuss the reasons for lateness.
- Students arriving to afternoon lessons after 1.45pm will be marked late by their subject teacher and be issued with a C1.

Absence notes

- After a period of absence, even if it is only for one session (i.e. a half day), a student must bring a note (addressed to her form tutor) explaining why the absence occurred. This communication can also be via email. The letter or email is passed to the Attendance officer for entry onto SIMS .
- Parents/carers are asked to advise the school by telephone or email each day if a student is going to be absent.
- Telephone messages are acceptable as an explanation for absence provided the person receiving the call is convinced of the authenticity of the call.
- It is important that a check is made on the authenticity of absence on the first day of all absence, if no communication from home has been received.
- Requests for leave of absence for a visit to the doctor/dentist/hospital need to be made in advance to the Attendance officer.

Absence from school

Most absences are for good reasons and will generally be authorised by the school, for example:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments (preferably, these should be made after school or during holidays)
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement

The following reasons are amongst those for which authorisation is not given:

- Looking after the house
- Shopping during school hours
- Birthdays
- Day trips

Holidays

Students should not be absent from school to go on a family holiday. Only in exceptional circumstances may the Head teacher give permission for a student to be absent for this reason. There is no right to take a holiday in term time and parents are strongly advised not to book a holiday before discussing their exceptional circumstances with the Head Teacher. If a student is absent from school because of a holiday which has not

been agreed, this will be classified as an unauthorised absence and parents may be fined or legal action taken against them.

Re-integrating long-term absentees

The management of the transition back to full-time schooling after long-term absence (for any reason) will play a key role in a student's successful reintegration.

The return of the long-term absentee needs to be carefully planned.

To ease the return of the long-term absentee the school may need to:

- Nominate a key person to co-ordinate, monitor and review the student's return, this will usually be the students Head of Year
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and alerted to the situation.
- Consider the possible need for a phased or gradual return.
- Consider the timetable and determine what is immediately possible and manageable for the student.
- Ensure that any re-introductory programme/timetable is flexible.
- Consider the need to allocate another student as a 'mentor' to the returning student.
- Ensure that the student knows what is expected of them.
- Ensure that the parents understand the reintegration process, gaining their support where possible.
- Review the plan regularly and adjust as necessary, based on the developing needs of the student.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day