

# Queen's Park C.E./U.R.C. Primary School



Queen's Park C.E./URC  
Primary School

## Attendance Policy

September 2021

Reviewed: September 2022

*Our vision for Queen's Park C.E./U.R.C. Primary School*

*Together we believe, achieve and enjoy.*

### *Together, we believe, achieve and enjoy*

*Through our vision, we serve our community by providing an inclusive, happy, secure and caring Christian environment where all are valued and respected. We believe that God loves all his children unconditionally and values the uniqueness of the individual and recognise the diversity and range of contributions that each child can make.*

*Following the Church of England's Vision for Education 'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10, we provide a high-quality education within a creative, stimulating, encouraging and mutually supportive environment where children are enabled to develop the skills they require to become successful.*

#### *Our Core Christian Values*

*Love*

*Forgiveness*

*Trust*

*Respect*

*Honesty*

*Hope*

#### *Statutory Framework*

*A pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil.*

*The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only the school's acceptance of the explanation offered by the letter/message authorises the absence.*

*Together we believe, achieve and enjoy.*

## *Rights and Responsibilities*

### *School*

*Queen's Park C.E./U.R.C. Primary School expects all pupils to attend regularly and to arrive on time in a fit condition to learn.*

*Staff will encourage good attendance and punctuality with all pupils and will lead through personal example.*

*The school employs a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and works closely with parents when attendance/punctuality gives cause for concern.*

*Parents who use English as a second language or who have literacy problems will be offered support from school in matters of communication if school are made aware of these issues.*

*Parents are informed promptly either by the school or the schools Education Welfare Officer of any attendance concerns that may arise.*

### *Pupils*

*Pupils are expected to attend regularly and on arrive on time.*

*Pupils will be encouraged to achieve and maintain a good attendance through assemblies, incentives and reward certificates.*

### *Parents*

*Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.*

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Parents are responsible for informing the school before 9.15am (or as soon as possible) on the first day of any absence of the reason why their child is absent by phone call or personal visit. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to support absences.

Parents should avoid routine medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours unless it is a specialist appointment that cannot be arranged outside school hours. Parents should inform school before an appointment and a copy of any documentation should be shown to the school office so that the absence can be authorised.

Parents are expected to attend meetings on request if concerns arise about their child's attendance.

### Registration

The attendance register is a legal requirement and must be taken twice daily. The register is taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. School must distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences.

Registration is an important time when children are welcomed by the class teacher and news and information is shared. Children who arrive late miss out on this crucial time.

Registers are recorded electronically and coded in accordance with current government advice. Pupil absence will be recorded as 'N' (reason not known) until school accept a reason for the absence. This will then be changed to either an authorised or unauthorised code. School will make the decision whether an absence will be authorised.

The schools register will inform the fire evacuation register.

If the computer system fails a paper register will be taken by the class teacher. This will be entered on to the system at the first opportunity.

### The school day

There have been temporary changes made to the school day in line with COVID-19 Restrictions.

- Children are admitted between school at 8:40am - 9am
- Registration begins at 8:40am. At 9am the school doors are locked. Registration ends at 9:15am
- Children arriving after 9am must enter through the front door so as to receive a mark, they will be coded 'L' late on the register.
- The morning register will close at 9:15am
- Children arriving after this time will be coded 'U' this counts as an unauthorised absence OR any other code the school decides to record the late arrival correctly.

Afternoon registers close at 1:10 (EYFS KSI, 1:20 (LKS2) 1:30 (UKS2)

School takes punctuality very seriously. If parents do not address this issue promptly it can lead to legal sanctions such as a Penalty Notice fine.

Parents of children who arrive late on a regular basis will be invited into school to discuss the issues and concerns around the punctuality of their child.

### Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

All absences should be explained by the parent before 9.15am or as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

School employ a 'first day response' system for chasing up unexplained absence, this is a safeguarding strategy. If school cannot make contact with parents the schools Education Welfare Officer will be requested to visit the home to find out the reason why children are absent. School will then decide whether or not to authorise the absence. Parents are requested to return their child to school as soon as possible after an absence even if there is only one day of the school week left.

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Unavoidable medical appointments (with evidence)
- Days of religious observance (with evidence)
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement

If a child's absence is a cause for concern school can ask the parent for medical evidence such as prescriptive medicine, doctors stamped appointment cards, care at the chemist booklet etc in order to authorise further absence. Parents will not be asked for doctor's notes that incur a cost.

The school nurse is always available to give assistance and advice to parents.

Absence from school will **not** be authorised for:

- Shopping
- Looking after siblings or other family members
- Minding the house
- Birthdays

Parents of children with a high incidence of unauthorised absence may be subjected to Legal Sanctions such as Penalty Notice fines OR prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

### Leave of absence during term time

School cannot authorise time off for family holidays during in term time and Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such holidays.

Parents can only apply for leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. Parents must apply in writing to the headteacher well in advance of the absence. The headteacher will decide if the Leave will be granted and how many days will be authorised.

If the headteacher does not grant an application for leave of absence and parents decide to take the leave anyway, the absence will be unauthorised and the parents may receive Penalty Notice fines. Penalty Notice Fines can be issued to each parent for every child concerned.

### Strategies for Promoting Attendance

1. Parents and pupils will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, parents' evenings etc.) of the importance and value of good attendance.
2. Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice.
3. The school employs the services of a Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to support the school in meeting its legal obligations with regard to school attendance. The EWO will investigate all arising attendance

*issues in accordance with current government guidance and legislation.*

- 4. Parents of pupils whose attendance falls below 95% may be invited to agree an attendance action plan OR a Parenting Contract with the EWO and the headteacher to help improve their child's attendance; this may include supportive referrals to the school nurse or a parenting course.*
- 5. A pupil with an attendance of 90% or below is categorised by the government as **Persistent Absentee (PA)**. All PA's will be targeted for improvement by the EWO and the headteacher. Parents of PA's with a high incidence of unauthorised absence may be the subjects of legal sanctions including **Penalty Notices OR Prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.***
- 6. The school will support Pupils who are absent through long term chronic or life-threatening illness by adhering to current government guidance for children with medical needs, this may involve a plan of support with home tuition and a re-integration plan back into school.*
- 7. Teachers and support staff who become aware of issues which may lead to attendance difficulties will report the issues in a timely manner to the Headteacher.*
- 8. When appropriate school will liaise with other agencies - Educational Welfare Service, Educational Psychology Service, Social Services, the School Nurse and other agencies to support and help pupils with attendance difficulties.*
- 9. The Head Teacher will report to the school's governing body termly on attendance matters.*

*This attendance policy adheres to current government legislation and guidance. For further information please refer to:*

*The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995  
The Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) 1997  
The Education (Pupil Registration) England 2001*

*This publication is an addendum to the non-statutory school attendance: guidance for schools.*

*We have amended regulations to enable schools, in the 2021 to 2022 academic year, to continue to record where a pupil does not attend in circumstances relating to COVID-19.*

### *Attendance expectations*

*Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:*

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil*
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence*
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct*
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education*

## *Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19*

*This category must be used to record sessions that take place in the 2021 to 2022 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:*

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)*
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID19*

*This category must only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.*

*The schools COVID-19 operational guidance sets out when pupils should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year. Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19' could apply In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows.*

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19*
- Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.*
- If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school.*

- If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness).
- Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result.
- Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.
- If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self isolation until the test.
- After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.
- Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19
- Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self isolate as part of a period of quarantine
- As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time.
- Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine.
- If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised

*Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable pupils should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend. If shielding is advised nationally or in a local area again, by DHSC, PHE or UKHSA, then pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA should be recorded as code X.*

*Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test*  
*In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register. Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the school attendance guide.*

### *Remote education*

*If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we expect schools to offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.*