

Presdales School



Title	ATTENDANCE POLICY
Version	September 2016
Author/Title	Mrs S Inwood
Committee Responsible	Achievement & Curriculum
Governor Link	
Date approved by Committee	September 2016
Date approved by Full Governing Body	
Review Date	September 2017 and thereafter annually

Enquiries & comments

Any enquiries and comments about this publication may be made to:

Telephone: 01920 462210 / **Email:** admin@presdales.herts.sch.uk

Address: Hoe Lane, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9NX

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 Attendance Improvement Officer and encourages good attendance in its publicity, its conversations with students, letters to parents and a system of certificates 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 by:

- forging and maintaining strong links with parents
- adapting the curriculum where necessary
- co-operating with and advising home tutors
- offering opportunities for counselling

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. If students arrive after the registers have closed (including afternoon registers) without an acceptable explanation, the whole half session will be marked as an 'unauthorised absence'.

Registration

- Regulations are in force, which require schools to differentiate in registers between authorised and unauthorised absence and to publish annually in prospectuses and governors' reports their statistics on all absences.
- It will be important that registration is given a high priority and that it takes place promptly at 8.50am and at 1.35pm.

- A note/entry in the homework diary authorising each and every period of absence must be brought by absentees on their return to school, so that an appropriate code can be put on their attendance record.
- If no note/entry in the homework diary is forthcoming, every effort will be made to obtain one from parents/guardians.
- If students are late for registration, they should sign in the late book in Main Reception.
- If students are going out during the morning/afternoon session, they should take a note/entry in the homework diary signed by her form teacher to Main Reception and then sign out in the late book.
- Any students in Years 7 – 11 arriving late (i.e. after 8.50am, irrespective of whether before or after 9.30am) twice in one week or four times in a month should receive a detention from their form teacher.
- Sixth formers should be warned that persistent lateness is unacceptable. The Head of Sixth Form will be advised of any persistent lateness.

Lateness

Students are considered late if they are not present to be registered by the form teacher at morning and afternoon registration but are present for subsequent lessons.

If students have been late for a legitimate reasons, their parents/guardians should provide a letter either in advance (in the case of a medical appointment, for example) or afterwards.

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) or an entry in her homework diary explaining why the absence occurred. Form tutors read these notes and, if they are satisfied of their authenticity, initial them, date them and put them in the tray in the staffroom. Their attendance is then updated on the computer and the note filed for reference.
- Parents/guardians 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 third day, if a note/entry in the homework diary or message has not been received. Known truants will be checked on the first day of their absence.
- Requests for leave of absence for a visit to the doctor/dentist/hospital may be dealt with by form tutors.

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. Parents should discuss the circumstances with the head teacher who will determine the number of school days the student can be absent, if leave is granted. 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 re-integration.

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 – a favourite teacher may be the ideal person.
- 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 child.
- 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 re-integration process, gaining their support where possible.