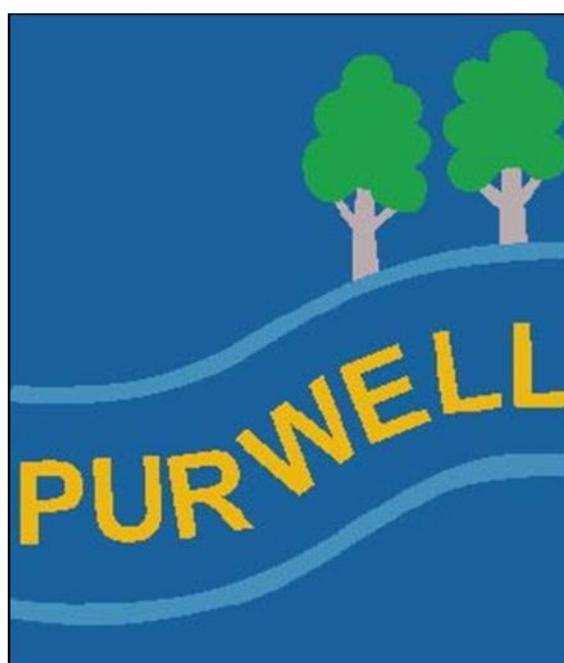


# Purwell Primary School

## Attendance Policy

2013



## **1. Initial Statement**

- At Purwell Primary School, we want the whole school community – governors, staff, parents and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- Purwell Primary School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Good attendance helps the children in this school community to maximise their learning. This policy will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.

## **2. Targets**

- This school sets targets in accordance with Statutory Instrument 2005 No 58 – The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2005. The annual target is the total absences expected in the school year, expressed as a percentage of the total possible attendance by pupils at the school.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the Governing Body has submitted annual targets to the Local Authority as required.

## **3. Expectations**

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils.

The expectations for school are that:

- The school will provide a safe learning environment
- The school will ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis
- The school will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality

The expectations for parents are that:

- Parents are expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- Parents will inform the school, on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school.
- If parents have failed to contact the school, the school will call the parents on the first day of absence.
- Parents will maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- Parents will ensure that school are informed of any changes of contact details

The expectations for pupils are that:

- All pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
- Pupils must remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person.
- Pupils are expected to be ready to learn.

## **4. Arrival at School**

- Children should arrive at school between 8.40am and 8:50am. They should enter the school through the playground gates to either the infant or junior playground. Junior children should go straight to their classrooms. Infant children should be accompanied whilst they wait on the playground. If the weather is bad, Infant children should be sent straight into their classroom.
- For the safety of the children they are not allowed to use the main entrance used by vehicles because of the obvious dangers.

## **5. Registration**

- Registers are taken at 8.50 am and at 1.00 pm. Registers close at 9.20 am and 1.30 pm. Registers are marked consistently by staff, and every child must have a mark in the register for every session.
- Any pupil arriving after closure of the register will be marked absent for the whole of the session
- Registers are marked in accordance with DfE guidance.

## **6. Lateness**

- Any pupil arriving after 8.55 am should report to the School Office.
- A member of the school office staff will record the late arrival to school.
- A member of the school office staff will ensure that the later arrival is transferred into the register.
- In the event of an emergency, the late arrivals sheet is taken to the Assembly Point.

## **7. Following up Lateness**

- Parents whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted by a member of school staff, who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality.
- Initially, the parent would be contacted by the school office to follow up late arrivals to school.
- If late arrivals are due to circumstances outside the pupil's control, eg delayed buses or road closure, then late arrivals are marked as authorised.
- External agencies, such as the Attendance Team may be informed if lateness continues.

## **8. Absences**

- Notification must be provided for all absences from school.
- Notification will be accepted from parent/carer or adult family member.
- Notification will be accepted by telephone, email or letter by 10.00am.
- Letters should be given to the class teacher when the child returns to school or emails to the School Office address noting the illness.
- Notifications are stored with the class register, and stored for the period of the academic year, unless requested otherwise.
- Absences can be authorised for a variety of reasons which may include: illness, medical appointments, family bereavement or moving house.
- Absences can be refused authorisation for a variety of reasons, which may include: holidays, shopping, birthdays, haircuts.
- Absences are authorised by the Headteacher.
- The school may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided. If there is any doubt about an absence, the decision will be made by the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher would make the decision to unauthorise absence once authorised, and then inform parents.
- All attendance under 90% will not be authorised unless a medical certificate is given. The Headteacher will make the decision regarding authorisation.
- Pupils must attend school on the day of any medical appointments unless the appointment is out of Hertfordshire. For example, if a pupil has a medical appointment in the afternoon, they must attend school in the morning, or if medical appointment is in the morning, they must return to school for the afternoon session. Appointment cards may be requested prior to the appointment.

## **9. Leaving and Returning to School during the School Day**

- When pupils leave or return to school during the school day, office staff must be notified.
- Parents are requested to contact the school by letter to inform them of any appointments.
- All pupils should sign out on leaving the school building.
- In the event of an emergency, the Signing in and out book is taken to the Assembly Point.

## **10. Following up Absence**

- The school follows up all absences from school.
- Prolonged or regular absence from school is dealt with in various ways which might include; letters to parents, phone calls to parents, meetings in school, involvement of the AIO or other professionals.
- If other professionals are known to be involved, they will be informed of any concerns about school attendance.

- If a pupil is returning to school after a prolonged period, then appropriate support will be given to help them settle back in.
- The Headteacher, in conjunction with external agencies, is responsible for making a referral to Hospital and Home Education when a pupil is likely to be absent for a long time owing to illness.
- The School Office is responsible for completing the EWN1 forms to make the Attendance Improvement Officer aware that a pupil has been taken off roll (forms are kept in the School Office).
- The school follows the Hertfordshire County Council guidance on Exclusions

#### **11. First Day Response**

- The school uses First Day Response.
- This is for all pupils absent from school where no reason has been received for their absence.
- First day response is carried out by the School Office staff.
- The School Office staff makes a list of absences when the registers are returned to the school office.
- All first day response calls will be made at 10:30 am, after checking with teachers at the beginning of break that the pupil has not arrived in school without coming via the School Office. A record will be made if there is no response.
- The School Office staff will update the registers with any information received from first day response calls.

#### **12. Term Time Holidays**

- The school will not authorise requests for taking family holidays during term time
- Parents are made aware of the school ethos on holidays during term time, through the school prospectus, new parents' meetings and through regular items in the school newsletter.
- Nursery children are exempt from the above procedures.

#### **13. Rewards**

- The school rewards good attendance.
- Individual pupils receive certificates for excellent or much improved attendance as appropriate.
- Classes are rewarded for good attendance on a weekly basis.

#### **14. Working with External Agencies**

- The school works in partnership with external agencies and teams to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school.
- The Headteacher regularly meets the external agencies on an agreed schedule.
- The school works with individual pupils and their parents to improve poor attendance.
- When attendance does not improve sufficiently, and after discussion with advisors, the school will make a formal referral Children, Schools and Families.

#### **15. Legal Action**

- Legal action may be taken if deemed necessary by the Headteacher and agencies. This may include fixed penalty notices and court action. 21 unauthorised sessions within a term may lead to a fixed term penalty notice and a fine will be issued. If the fine is not paid within 42 days, the fine will be increased. An extract from *Penalty Notices (Truancy) Guidance for Schools and Academies* issued by Hertfordshire County Council is attached as Appendix A.
- A template of the 'at risk warning letter' to send to parents is attached as Appendix B
- A template of the 'breach letter' to send to parents is attached as Appendix C.

#### **16. Publication of Information**

- Parents are made aware of the school ethos on attendance and punctuality through the School Prospectus, new parents' meetings and through regular items in the school newsletter.
- Attendance is a regular item on the school newsletter.
- Parents, pupils staff and governors are informed of whole school attendance issues and statistics on a regular basis.
- Attendance is reported to governors, via the Headteacher's report.
- Pupils are informed about the importance of school attendance via PSHE lessons and school assemblies.
- Members of staff are informed of any changes to the school's Attendance Policy through staff meetings.
- The school shares information on individual pupils' attendance as necessary with parents, pupils, staff and outside agencies.
- If a parent's first language is not English, any communication will be translated as necessary, if possible.
- The School Office is responsible for ensuring that termly data is submitted to the DfE.

**Extract from *Penalty Notices (Truancy) Guidance for Schools and Academies* issued by Hertfordshire County Council**

**7. Amount and payment of penalty**

The amount of the penalty to be paid shall be:

- a) £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice
- b) £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt of the notice

For offences alleged to have been wholly or partly committed before 1 September 2012, the penalties shall be:

- c) £50 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice
- d) £100 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days of receipt of the notice

A notice served by post is deemed to have been received on the second day after posting it by first class post.

If the penalty notice is not paid in full by the end of the 42-day period the Local Authority must either prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice. The notice can only be withdrawn under limited circumstance (see para 9). There is no provision to prosecute for failing to pay the penalty.

In circumstances where the school or police have instigated the issuing of a penalty notice they will be required to provide a witness statement and may be required to attend court. (see Code of Conduct)

**At risk warning letter**

**Address**

Tel :  
Fax :  
My ref :  
Your ref:  
Date:

Dear

**The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007  
(Name of pupil). Registered pupil at (School).**

This is a formal warning that you are at risk of being in breach of the above regulations. Your child (name of child) has been absent from school and the absence has not been authorised. If the number of unauthorised absence sessions reaches 21 or more in the current and/or previous term the Local Authority may issue you with a Penalty Notice.

The Penalty Notice requires you to pay a fine of £60 within 28 days. If this fine is not paid within the time limit the penalty rises to £120 which must be paid within 42 days.

If you are issued with a Penalty Notice this enables you to discharge your potential liability for an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 of failure to secure your child's regular attendance at school. If you do not pay the fine you will be liable for prosecution for this offence.

If you wish to discuss the matter further please contact me within 5 working days.

Yours sincerely

**Breach letter**

**Address**

Tel :  
Fax :  
My ref :  
Your ref:  
Date:

Dear

**The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007  
(Name of pupil). Registered pupil at (School).**

This is a formal warning that you are in breach of the above regulations. Your child (name of child) has unauthorised absence of 21 sessions or more in the previous and/or current term and this empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty notice.

The penalty notice requires you to pay a fine of £60 within 28 days. If this fine is not paid within the time limit the penalty rises to £120 which must be paid within 42 days.

If you are issued with a penalty notice this enables you to discharge your potential liability for an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 of failure to secure your child's regular attendance at school. If you do not pay the fine you will be liable for prosecution for this offence.

**Unless your child attends regularly a penalty notice will be issued. You will not receive another warning before the fine is imposed.**

If you wish to discuss the matter further please contact me within 2 working days.

Yours sincerely