



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

School vision and values

At Queensbridge we aim to develop well rounded, confident and responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their full potential. We do this by providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environment in which everyone is equal and all achievements are celebrated.

RESPECT

- We are responsible for our actions
- We are empathetic
- We are inclusive

COLLABORATION

- We are able to ask for and give support
- We are articulate
- We are a team

PERSEVERANCE

- We don't give up
- We celebrate our mistakes
- We are ambitious

POSSIBILITIES

- We are globally aware
- We are forward thinking
- We are curious

1. Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. Queensbridge Primary School (hereafter, referred to as 'School') believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Our school value's all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

2. Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or



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unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

What does the law say?

This advice summarises the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and explains how they apply to local authorities, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.

These requirements are contained in:

The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

3. Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Parents should advise the school by telephone, before 8:50am, every day when a child is absent and provide the school with an expected date of return. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, though verbal explanations may be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

Illness In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded (No alternative provision made) Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence.

Family Holidays and Extended Leave Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday. Should a parent wish to apply for leave of absence they must meet with the Headteacher and they will consider if the leave is for exceptional circumstances. In line with the Hackney policy leave should only be granted for exceptional circumstances. If parents take children on holiday during term time without authorisation they will be subject to a Penalty Warning Letter and then potentially be fined.

Parents wishing to take their child on holiday during term time must send a written request to the head teacher before holiday arrangements are made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account:

- Length of the proposed leave
- Age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record



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- Proximity of SAT's and public examinations
- Pupil's ability to catch up the work missed
- Pupil's educational needs
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Previous term time holidays taken
- When the request was made

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state:

- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil still goes on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases the school may issue a Penalty Notice or a fine.

Religious Observance Parklands Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

Traveller Absence The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

Late Arrival Registration begins at 8:50am, pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 9:30am pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late, this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the school office to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Unauthorised absence Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school



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- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school

4. Children Missing in Education

There are many reasons why a child may become missing in education. Although not exhaustive, the most common being:

Pupils at risk of harm/ neglect – for children who are in immediate danger or at risk of harm, a referral should be made immediately to children's social care and the police, if appropriate;

- Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families;
- Children of Service Personnel;
- Missing children and runaways;
- Children who cease to attend school;
- Children of new migrant families.
- Taken from CME 2016

Schools' responsibility: Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity. School will return a form to the Local Authority, detailing information on the child. Schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, therefore must closely monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. As part of this, it is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority. (CME 2016)

Deletions from the register: School will seek to make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child, jointly with the local authority. The local authority should be notified in advance of the deletion, when the school becomes aware that the deletion will be made. School must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupils name from the school admission register under any of the grounds set out in the CME 2016 guidance – see Appendix A. When removing a pupil's name, the local authority must be notified of:

- The full name of the pupil;
- The full name and address of the parent with whom the child normally resides;
- At least one telephone number of the parent;
- The pupil's future address and destination school (if known);
- The reason(s) why the pupil name has been removed from the admission register.

Local authorities have a duty⁵ to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

⁵Under section 436A of the Education Act 1996

Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days following an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and local authority have jointly made reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies where the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. (CME 2016).

School Policy: Following guidelines, School has a strict policy regarding absence when School has not been notified of absence and/or cannot contact parent/ guardian.

Day 1 – Absence text to main contact held on SIMS

Day 2 – Phone call to main contact held on SIMS



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Day 3/4 – Home visit, carried out by Learning Mentor

Day 5 – Request for welfare check

Day 10 – Notification to Local Authority

5. Home Educated Children

Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school⁶. On receipt of written notification to home educate, school will inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. School will not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home. However, if parent/ guardian fails/ refuses to provide notification, a referral will be made to the Local Authority with immediate effect.

⁶ Section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

6. Child relocates

When a child moves, attempts will be made by School to contact local schools to provide a setting for the child where they will be educated. If no provision is available, support will be offered to complete a transfer request. The Local Authority will be notified to ensure suitable support can be offered to provide education. When a child transfers both into and out of School, a form must be filled in and returned to the Local Authority notifying the pupil movement.

7. Exclusion and Permanent Exclusion

School must arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. If a permanent exclusion has been put in place, the Local Authority will be notified with immediate effect.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

School believe that improved attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community. As such, the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Bi-annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Agree school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department of Children, Schools and Families as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence



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- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The Leadership Team will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed bi-annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Children, Schools and Families as required and on time
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

Teachers, support staff and Learning Mentors will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

Request that Parents will:



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- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time, where this is unavoidable, send a written leave request to the Head Teacher in advance of booking the holiday

9. Using Attendance Data

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every week The Attendance Administrator will provide children and class teachers with attendance data for the previous week for their class. This information is shared via whole school assemblies and weekly newsletters which are sent home to parents. Each term this information is provided for each pupil within their class. These are also shared with parents (for their child) twice yearly during parents evening and with end of year reports. The list will be presented in numerical descending order with the highest attenders at the top; every pupil will be colour coded as indicated below:

GREEN	pupils with attendance between 100% and 95%
AMBER	pupils with attendance between 94% and 86%
RED	pupils with attendance below 85%

This pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (Appendix B). Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment. School will share attendance data with the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the local authority as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

10. Support Systems

School recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils



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- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies
- Learning mentors
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship groups
- PSHE
- Reward systems
- Time limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Inclusion units
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, School will consider the use of legal sanctions.

Pupils who have more than 4 broken weeks of illness during one term will be required to provide medical proof of illness before any further illness absence can be authorised. Medical proof can be in the form of a medical appointment card or a prescription in the child's name.

11. Legal Sanctions

Prosecution Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered pupil at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

Parenting Contracts (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) A Parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly.

The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

Parenting Contracts will be used in accordance with Manchester City Council's Parenting Contract Protocol.

Penalty Notices (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) Penalty Notices will be considered when:



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- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school
- A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve
- A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued by the Attendance Improvement Team, alongside Parklands of £60 if paid within 28 days or £100 if paid within 42 days of the date the Notice was issued.
- Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Appendix A:

Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register (CME 2016)

1	Where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.
2	That the child has been registered as a pupil at another school - except where it has been agreed by the proprietor that the pupil should be registered at more than one school.
3	Where a pupil is registered at more than one school that he has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor of any other school at which he is registered has given consent to the deletion.
4	Where the child has ceased to attend the school and the proprietor has received written notification from the parent that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.
5	That child has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school at which he is registered.
6	In the case of a pupil granted leave of absence in accordance with regulation that (i) the pupil has failed to attend the school within the ten school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which such leave was granted; (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
7	Where the child is certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he nor his parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
8	Where the child has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and — at no time was his absence during that period authorised by the proprietor (ii) the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and (iii) the proprietor of the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the pupil is.
9	That the child is detained in pursuance of a final order made by a court or of an order of recall made by a court or the Secretary of State, that order being for a period of not less than four



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	months, and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return to the school at the end of that period.
10	The pupil has died.
11	That the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets
12	That the child has been permanently excluded from the school.
13	Where the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, that he has not on completing such education transferred to a reception, or higher class at the school.