

INSPIRING FUTURES



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archibald Primary School, part of the Endeavour Trust, is committed to raising standards in education and ensuring that all pupils can fulfil their potential. For pupils to gain the best from their time at Archibald Primary School it is vital that they achieve excellent attendance and punctuality. We strive for 100% attendance for all pupils. Archibald Primary School recognises that promoting good attendance and punctuality prepares pupils to flourish in the disciplines of life, learning and work. We work proactively with parents, carers, pupils, staff and external agencies to secure this aim.
- 1.2 To gain the greatest benefit from education it is vital that pupils attend regularly which means being at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for absence is authorised by the Headteacher.
- 1.3 The school is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Parents are expected to contact the school to inform them of the reason for their child's absence. The school will judge whether or not the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence and mark the register accordingly.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Archibald Primary School :
 - 2.1.1 Emphasises that it is the responsibility of everyone in the school to improve attendance and punctuality.
 - 2.1.2 Needs to ensure that all its pupils access a full-time education which meets their needs and allows all to realise their potential.
 - 2.1.3 Will strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each pupil can engage in all opportunities offered.
 - 2.1.4 Will work with pupils and their families to ensure every pupil has good attendance and punctually.
 - 2.1.5 Will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents/carers who are not supportive of the school's high standards over attendance and punctuality.
 - 2.1.6 Has an effective system of communication with parents/carers together with appropriate agencies to provide mutual information and support.
 - 2.1.7 Will continue to develop ICT-based attendance recording systems in order to provide accurate information and to use suitable tracking strategies to recognise any trends that can damage good attendance and learning.

3. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ARCHIBLAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

- 3.1 We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and or unjustified absence.
- 3.2 We will work closely with parents/carers where a pupil's absence is a cause for concern.
- 3.3 We will support pupils to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
- 3.4 We will support pupils returning to school after prolonged absence.
- 3.5 We will regularly review pupil data to identify emerging patterns of absence to enable us to identify causes and remove barriers where necessary.

4. WHAT ARCHIBALD PRIMARY SCHOOL EXPECTS FROM PARENTS/CARERS:

- 4.1 It is also important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the pupil, that a parent is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day.

Parents/carers should:

- 4.1.1 Ensure their child attends regularly, punctually, dressed in uniform and equipped to learn.
- 4.1.2 Ensure their child attends every day that Archibald Primary School is open unless they are too ill to do so.
- 4.1.3 Avoid keeping their child away from Archibald Primary School for any reason other than illness or other authorised absence.
- 4.1.4 Avoid arranging holidays during term time.
- 4.1.5 Inform Archibald Primary School if their child is unable to attend by 8.30am on each day of absence. Parents/carers can contact the school via the dedicated absence line 01642 804101 – press option for attendance option/Seesaw message to class teacher/inform the office verbally.
- 4.1.6 Parents/carers must include a full reason for the absence and expected date of return.

5. WHAT ARCHIBALD PRIMARY SCHOOL EXPECTS FROM PUPILS:

- 5.1 To attend regularly and on time.
- 5.2 To be punctual to all lessons.
- 5.3 To ensure that they register for both morning and afternoon sessions.

6. REGISTRATION

- 6.1 The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session.
- 6.2 All pupils are registered at the start of the morning session and the start of the afternoon session.
- 6.3 The register is marked using the Department of Education Attendance and Absence Codes. A list of Attendance Codes can be found in Appendix A.

7. PUNCTUALITY

- 7.1 Archibald Primary School pupil entrances close at 8.40am. Pupils who arrive at school after 8.40am must enter school through the main entrance and report to the main office.
- 7.2 If a pupil is not in their classroom at 8.40am then they will be marked as late.
- 7.3 Repeated lateness will be reported to parents/carers and other sanctions will be considered.
- 7.4 Registers will remain open until 9:00am, should a student arrive at school after this time without good cause, the student's attendance may be recorded with a 'U' code for that session. The 'U' code is classed as an absence and may contribute towards the instigation of attendance proceedings.

8. AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- 8.1 Authorised absence is where Archibald Primary School has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers cannot authorise absence; only the school can do this.
- 8.2 Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:
 - looking after brothers/sisters/unwell parents/carers
 - birthdays
 - days out
 - shopping trips
 - holidays
 - special occasions, where Archibald Primary School does not agree that the absence should be granted.

NB: This list is not exhaustive.

- 8.3 Medical/dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, pupils should, where practically possible, come to school before the appointment, sign out and return to school after the appointment. Proof of the medical appointment is required (medical card

or appointment letter) and must be shown to a member of the attendance team, prior to the appointment.

- 8.4 Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a pupil's absence, Archibald Primary School will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise the absence or record it as unauthorised.
- 8.5 Absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.
- 8.6 Where a pupil feels or becomes unwell during the school day, they must make a member of staff aware. A school first aider will assess the pupil and will either review the pupil's condition or will contact the parent or carer in order to make arrangements to send the pupil home, this decision can also be made by a senior member of staff.

9. Children who go missing throughout the school day

- 9.1 This protocol refers to pupils who register at the school in the morning and then go missing during the school day without a satisfactory explanation. A pupil will be classed as missing when their whereabouts cannot be established or the context suggests the person may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.
- 9.2 A pupil missing during school hours would be prioritised as significant risk where:
 - The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability. Vulnerability characteristics may include;
 - Children on a plan (Early Help, Child in Need, Looked After or Child Protection Plan)
 - A disability and/or special educational needs
 - Substance misuse
 - Education health care plan
 - The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.
 - There are indications that the child/young person has already come to harm (CSE, grooming, radicalisation etc.).
- 9.3 Other contributory factors should be taken into consideration when determining if the pupil is at significant risk, for example;
 - Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?
 - Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
 - Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?
 - Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned for the child?
- 9.4 Procedure:

Once a pupil is identified as missing by any member of school staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed. School staff will try to locate the pupil and try to establish the whereabouts of them, contacting home and contacting the pupil via their mobile telephone number if it is known. Staff will use professional judgement

and risk assesses the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupil's whereabouts before notifying the Police. Time lines should be on a case by case basis. Whilst the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the police and act in accordance with police instructions.

10. HOW WE RESPOND TO ABSENCE/LATENESS

- 10.1 If a pupil is absent without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, Archibald Primary School will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be made via telephone call from the Attendance Officer/Office staff who will attempt to call telephone numbers from priority contacts. Archibald Primary School asks that parents/carers ensure contact details are up to date at all times.
- 10.2 Safeguarding and wellbeing home visits will be carried out when a pupil has been absent from school for three days regardless of whether contact has been made or not. The purpose of this is:
 - 10.2.1 To check on the welfare of the pupil.
 - 10.2.2 To identify any support needed to encourage the pupil's return to school.
 - 10.2.3 To identify any previously undisclosed issues that may be affecting attendance.
- 10.3 Home visits will also be carried out:
 - 10.3.1 Where a pupil has been absent from school for two days without any contact from home to explain the absence.
 - 10.3.2 Where there are joint sibling absences, the school will also work in collaboration with local secondary schools.
 - 10.3.3 Where pupils are identified as vulnerable or are in attendance proceedings.
- 10.4 Further to this:
 - 10.4.1 Where a pupil's absence is cause for concern, the school will write to parents/carers and/or invite the parents/carers into school/refer to the Education Welfare Officer/Local Authority.
 - 10.4.2 Where 5 days/10 sessions of absence has accumulated, a request will be made to provide medical evidence to support and authorise further absences due to illness. Medical evidence can be in the form of an appointment card/dispensing receipt or empty medication packaging with the dispensing label showing pupil's name and date dispensed.
- 10.5 Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated despite intervention, Fixed Penalty notices may be issued in line with the Local Authority's

Code of Conduct, exceptionally poor attendance may be referred to the Local Authority to instigate legal action.

11. PERSISTENT ABSENCE

11.1 A pupil becomes a Persistent Absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent/carer(s) full support and co-operation to tackle this.

11.2 Any pupil whose attendance has reached the persistent absence threshold or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority for intervention. Intervention may be via an action plan to improve attendance. This may involve a Family Plan or parental contract. Further to this we may make referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant Archibald Primary School staff and parents/carers to support with improving attendance.

11.3 Where parents/carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by Archibald Primary School, further intervention may take place which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed by the local authority. Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

12. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION (CME)

Archibald Primary School follows Middlesbrough's guidance for 'Children Missing Education.' This guidance relates to pupils who fail to arrive at the school or fails to return after a leave of absence or ceases attending and their whereabouts are not known. It is not for pupils on roll with low attendance or are refusing to attend which will be dealt with through school attendance proceedings.

13. LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

13.1 Any absence interrupts the continuity of pupil's learning. Government Legislation now states that only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence, amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Please refer to the Department for Education for the latest guidance. Parent/carer(s) are strongly urged not to take students out of school for holidays during term time.

Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that:

13.1.1 Your request will not be authorised during statutory test periods.

13.2 It is expected that a Leave of Absence Request Form is submitted to the Attendance Officer **at least 2 weeks** term time in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form. If the Leave of Absence is refused and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Headteacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority, requesting a penalty notice to be issued against you.

13.3 Fixed Penalties require **each parent to pay a fine of £80 per child** if paid within 21 days or **£160** if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any pupil taking leave of absence without prior notification to Archibald Primary School. Further information in regard to how Middlesbrough Council processes Fixed Penalty notices is available in appendix B of this document.

14. RE-INTEGRATION FOLLOWING LONG-TERM ABSENCE

Where a pupil has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, Archibald Primary School will:

- 14.1 Provide support for the pupil in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to Archibald Primary School.
- 14.2 Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- 14.3 Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.
- 14.4 Consider a personalised programme of return if appropriate.

15. PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- 15.1 Parent/ carers and pupils are regularly informed of their attendance levels and if appropriate how they can improve.
- 15.2 Where appropriate, pupils whose attendance falls below the target for Archibald Primary School will be set a new target for improvement and progress towards these, and will be regularly reviewed.
- 15.3 Good and improved attendance and punctuality is promoted and celebrated through Archibald Primary's praise and reward system. There are a number of initiatives throughout the year which are designed to encourage positive attitudes towards attendance and punctuality as part of our '100% Attendance' campaign.
- 15.4 Pupils, parents/carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- 15.5 Parents/carers are encouraged to contact Archibald Primary School Attendance Officer at any time to discuss their child's attendance on 01642 804101.

- 15.6 Regular meetings will be held with the appropriate members of staff/external agencies to identify and support those pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern.
- 15.7 Pupils' attendance will be reported regularly as part of our pupil reports. Parents/carers will also receive bespoke communication to praise attendance at key points throughout the year.

16. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS, THE LAW AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

- 16.1 Registers are legal documents; regulatory requirements placed on schools regarding the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- 16.2 Archibald Primary School works together with the Local Authority to ensure that parents/carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: From Penalty Notices to a referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.
- 16.3 If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly their parents/carers are guilty of an offence under **Section 444 of the Education Act 1996**. Any unauthorised absences may result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty under the **Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003**.
- 16.4 A parent is defined as:
- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
 - Any person who, although not a natural parent, has responsibility for the care of a child or young person. This means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent.
- 16.5 For further details refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>.

Appendix A

Department for Education Attendance Codes

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present AM	Present
\	Present PM	Present
A	SSB/PLC	Present
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another school	Not counted in possible attendances
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (Not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved education activity
L	Late (Before registers have closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not counted in possible attendances
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration has closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Not counted in possible attendances

Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5	Unable to attend as student in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable causes	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Prospective student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole school closure	Not counted in possible attendances



Middlesbrough Council

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Please note: The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Per Parent*, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

**Second Offence
(within 3 years)**

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for the same child for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

***Parent**

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

**Third Offence and Any Further Offences
(within 3 years)**

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.



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