



Attendance Policy
Adopted by FGB February 2009
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Reviewed with amendments

Reviewed without amendments on: Chair *E. Maykels*

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Head *H. Trickett*

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CHAIR: *E Maykels*

HEAD: *H. Trickett*

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CHAIR:

HEAD: .



Attendance Policy

	Signed	Date
Adopted by the Governing Body: February 2009		
(10): November 2015 (annual review)	<i>C. Crook</i>	<i>Nov'15</i>
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(13): March 2018 (annual (17/18) review & update ²)	<i>A. Erasmus</i>	<i>Mar'18</i>

¹ New penalty notice rules and advice on chasing absence from our A.I.O.

² Morning Registers to close before 30 minutes have elapsed on advice from our AIO.

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1. School Mission and Aims

The school mission statement and aims are at the heart of our school life at Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School:

“We all care for each other and achieve our best.”

Regular attendance at school is a key component of the education of the children; the school can only achieve these aims if it works closely with parents/carers to ensure good attendance.

The purpose of our School Attendance Policy is to promote regular school attendance and contribute to learning, achievement and the education of the whole child.

2. Aims of the Attendance Policy are to:

- Set out requirements and expectations for school attendance
- Improve the quality of school life
- Create and maintain a culture in which good attendance is valued
- Be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions
- Value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive

3. The Benefits of the Attendance Policy are as follows:

- Clear guidance to staff, pupils and parents/carers ensures that everyone involved in school attendance is aware of the procedures
- Clear procedures contribute to the smooth running of the school
- Shows that the school cares that pupils attend
- Supports improved learning and achievement
- Improved attendance enables pupils to gain maximum benefit from their education, including improvement in social skills
- Updated policy is available when Ofsted inspects

4. Initial Statement

At Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School, we want the whole school community – governors, staff, parents/carers and pupils to be committed to high standards 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.

Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

5. Target Setting

As of Summer 2012 the Department for Education no longer requires schools to set targets for persistent absence and overall attendance. The Department however remains firmly of the view that unnecessary absence is unacceptable and must be prevented and tackled. The Department therefore expects all schools to continue focusing on reducing overall absence, particularly unauthorised absence and persistent absence. Absence will continue to be monitored closely and the Secretary of State's power to require an individual school to set absence targets where a school's absence record is of particular concern is being retained.

6. Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents/carers and pupils. The following states the expectations from each group:

a. Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School

- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery 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 encourage good attendance and will investigate all unexplained and unjustified absence
- School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality
- School will keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record
- School will work closely with parents/carers should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern
- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality

b. Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers are expected to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance
- Parents/carers will inform school in advance of planned absence, giving the reason for the absence and evidence as appropriate
- Parents/carers will inform school on the first day of unplanned absence, giving the reason for their child's absence from school, and also make contact with the school every subsequent day
- Parents/carers will avoid arranging family holidays during term time
- Parents/carers will follow up the child's absence with a written communication detailing the reason for their absence.
- Parents/carers will ensure that school are informed of any changes of contact details

c. Pupils

- Pupils must remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person
- Pupils are expected to be ready to learn
- Pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually
- Pupils will not leave the school without permission

7. Absences

- As part of our duty of care, we require notification from the parent/carer for every absence. This notification should be from the child's parent/guardian or other appropriate adult (as decided by the Headteacher).
- Planned absence;
 - Notification must be in writing and in advance of the absence.
 - Evidence, such as an appointment letter, should be provided.
- Unplanned absence;
 - First day
Initial notification must be on the first day of absence and by telephone to the school office or answer machine, or in person at the school office, and before 9.00am.
This is part of the school's duty of care which is why we must have a direct message.
 - Confirmation on following days
This should also be by 9.00am but may be by phone/answer machine, in person or by

SchoolGateway text.

However, for any absence that runs into more than one week, this must be by phone/answer machine or in person at the school office each Monday.

This is part of the school's duty of care and is why we must have a message every day.

- The only exception to contact every day is where the child is not allowed to return for a set time but contact should be repeated each Monday. See appendix A.

- If no reason has been provided for a pupil's absence, a parent of the pupil will be contacted by phone call or text message by 10am.

If we do not then receive a response, we may work through the emergency contact list for the child.

- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that contact details (phone numbers and addresses) held by the school are up to date.

- Once the child returns to school, confirmation of the reason for the absence should be given by letter or email.

- The history of contact and the reason for the absence is recorded in the register by a member of the office staff.
- Absences are authorised by the Headteacher.

a. Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School may authorise absences for:

- Illness
- Medical/dental appointments (though these should be made, whenever possible, outside school hours and evidence provided)
- Music or dance exams
- Year 6 visits/interviews for prospective secondary schools
- Death/funeral of a close relative of the child
- Exclusions
- Religious observance (maximum 3 days)

b. Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School will not authorise absences for:

- Shopping
- Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents/carers
- Birthdays
- Holidays in term time unless there are special circumstances
- Death of a pet
- Sleeping in.

- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School has the right to not authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.

8. Following up Absence

- If there is no explanation provided for the absence, a letter requesting this will be posted to the pupil's parent at the pupil's main address. If no reason or acceptable reason is forthcoming within 5 school days, the absence will be recorded as "unauthorised".
- We will inform the Attendance Improvement Officer once the duration of absence has exceeded 2 weeks. This will be sooner if deemed necessary.
- Attendance percentages will be reviewed half termly by the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers whose children have more than 10% absence will be contacted by the Headteacher who will work with the parents/carers to bring about an improvement in attendance. If there is prolonged or regular absence, there will be letters sent home to parents/carers in the first instance. If appropriate, there will be meetings with parents/carers in school and involvement of the Attendance Improvement Officer.
- In cases where attendance may be a concern, the Headteacher may require medical evidence in order to authorise an absence.

9. Doors Open

- The school entrance gate opens at 8.30am and the bells is rung at 8.50am.
- Pupils should not be left at school before 8.50am as there is no supervision on the playground.
- The school bell is rung for the start of the school day at 8.50am and children can enter class from this time ready to be registered at 8:55am.
- Late arriving children must use the front entrance of the school and report to the office.

10. Registration

- Registers are called in the first 5 minutes of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Morning registers officially close at 9.15am and afternoon registers after 5 minutes. Registers are marked consistently by staff.
- Any pupil arriving after closure of the register will be marked absent for the whole of the session. However, the pupil will be noted as present in the school from the "Late" book kept by the school office and used in the event of a fire.
- Registers will be marked in accordance with DfE guidance. (See Absence and Attendance Codes January 2009.)

11. Lateness

- Classroom doors will close at 8:55am and any pupil arriving after that time should report to the school office where a "Late" book is kept and filled in by the office staff.
- The reason for the late arrival needs to be explained to the office staff. A note is made as to the reason.
- The late classification "L" is used in the time period 8:55am to 9:15am. Any children arriving between 8:55am and 9:15am will have the minutes logged against their attendance record.
- A late arrival after 8:55am is transferred to the registers by a member of the office staff.
- In the case of a fire or similar emergency, the Late book is used in conjunction with the registers and Signing In/Out book.
- On rare occasions, if late arrivals are due to circumstances outside the pupil's control e.g. severe road accidents, road closures, snow, the registers will be kept open for a longer period. This decision will be taken by the Headteacher.
- If there is no valid reason for the late arrival and it is after 9:15am, then the session will be marked as "unauthorised".

12. Following up Lateness

- The office staff will have responsibility for collating lists of pupils who arrive late regularly. The lists will be given to the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers whose children are regularly late for school, will be contacted by the Headteacher who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality.

13. Leaving and returning to School during School Day

- A pupil's parent/carer must provide an appointment card/letter to support any absence during the school day. This should be given to the class teacher or the school office.
- When pupils leave or return to school during the school day they must do so with an adult and through the school office so that office staff are aware and the "Signing In/Out" book may be completed. This applies to all children, including those who normally walk by themselves at the start or end of the school day.
- It is the responsibility of the office staff to ensure that the "Signing In/Out" book is checked in the event of a fire.

14. Term Time Holidays

- Parents/carers are strongly advised not to take their children on holiday during term time.
- The school should be informed of all planned absence in advance.
- Due to changes contained in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013, the Headteacher may no longer grant leave during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.
- Any requests for exceptional absence must be in writing to the Headteacher in advance. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.
- Any absence not agreed as exceptional will be marked as **unauthorised**.

15. Rewards

- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School rewards good attendance. It does so individually, as a class and as a school. The systems for this are changed regularly to keep the ideas and rewards fresh and relevant.

16. Penalty Notices

- At Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School we expect parents/carers to work with us to address attendance problems. If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term (including unauthorised holiday and absence for which no explanation has been received) the Headteacher may ask the LA to issue a Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60, per parent/carer, per child, if paid within 21 days of the receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid the LA may prosecute the parents/carers for their child's irregular attendance.

17. Integrated Working

- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School works with other agencies and professionals to ensure that our pupils receive all the support available to achieve good attendance.
- The school will demonstrate full commitment to integrated working by: using the Common Assessment Framework; sharing information; encouraging staff to take on the role of Lead Professional; working with other agencies and being part of 'teams around the family'.

18. Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School works in partnership with the allocated A.I.O. to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school.
- The Headteacher, or delegated member of staff, meets the A.I.O. on an agreed schedule.
- Information to enable the A.I.O. to carry out an effective consultation visit and/or home visit will be provided by the school.
- The school will endeavour to ensure that any information which could assist the A.I.O. to keep safe is given to them.
- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School works with individual pupils and their parents/carers to improve poor attendance.
- When attendance does not improve sufficiently, and after discussion with the A.I.O., the school will make a formal referral to Children, Schools and Families.

19. Publication of Information

- Maple Cross JMI & Nursery School shares information on individual pupils' attendance as necessary with parents/carers, pupils and staff.

- A summary of this policy is included in the information given to new parents/carers.
- Attendance is a regular item on the agenda of school Governor' meetings.
- Pupils will be informed about the importance of school attendance through assemblies, presentations by visiting professionals, statistics, displays in the school and class work.
- Administrative staff will be responsible for ensuring that data collected by DfE is accurate.

Appendix A

When should my child return to school?



Chicken Pox When all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis None*	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever None*	Hand, foot & mouth None*	Impetigo When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies After first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Slapped Cheek None*	Whooping Cough 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Flu Until recovered	Head Lice None*	Threadworms None*	Tonsillitis None*		



This information is based on the Public Health Agency guide - full copy here

*No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed.



This information is a summary produced by agencies in Chester. A full copy of the guidance it is based on can be found at

https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf