



# Pilgrims School

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## Attendance Policy

December 2021

Next review date: July 2022



**Please note: 'School' refers to Early Years Foundation Stage (Little Pilgrims and Pre School) and Pilgrims Main School.**

Pilgrims recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in raising levels of attainment and to give every child the best possible educational experience. Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Therefore, our Attendance Policy aims to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities
- act early to address patterns of lateness and / or absence
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure pupils succeed whilst at school
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and benefit fully from them

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable and /or authorised by the Headteacher. We monitor attendance and punctuality daily. Children who attend Main School (Reception to Year 2) are expected to attend school for the full number of academic teaching days each year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)

### **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A communication from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation will the absence be authorised.

### **REGISTRATION PROCESS**

- Registers are taken at 8.45 am, in accordance with the codes as detailed in Appendix A.
- Any child arriving after the classroom doors have been closed at 8:45 am must report to Reception. A reasonable explanation will be sought from the parent and recorded and this will be recorded by the office as a late on iSAMS.
- Where a reasonable explanation is not forthcoming, this will be recorded as an unauthorised late (L) and the class teacher will be informed to follow this up.
- All registers will be checked by the office at 9.30 am. The parents of any child who has not been registered by this time will be contacted following our Safeguarding Policy (Section 11).
- Office staff are aware of children who attend extra-curricular clubs (e.g. tennis) during the registration period. Relevant coaches will inform the office where a child has not attended so that any necessary checks can be made.
- If no acceptable reasons are given for a child's absence by the parent, they will be marked in the register as an 'unauthorised absence'

- If the school is unable to contact the relevant parents, the register will be marked as unauthorised and the school will determine the necessary next steps to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the child and / or family.
- If the child does not return on the following day and no contact or explanation has been given the school will endeavour to contact the parents. In the unlikely event of an unexplained/unauthorised absence continuing, the school has a duty of care to notify the relevant authorities.

### **AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ATTENDANCE**

All absences must be explained by a parent. The school will then decide whether or not it will authorise the absence. All absences including the reasons given are recorded on the school's management information system (iSAMs).

Requests for absence can be made by parents for the following reasons:

- unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstance such as bereavement

Absences are authorised by the Headteacher and/or a member of the educational staff on the SLT, e.g. Deputy Head, DSL, Head of Early Years, SENDCo.

Absence from school for other reasons will be considered on a case by case basis however shopping/ general days out and persistent lateness would be considered as unauthorised.

### **HOLIDAYS**

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term time. If, however, parents apply to the school in advance, the school may grant up to two weeks term-time absence in any year for a family holiday. Apart from this, leave in term time can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **(a) School**

Pilgrims School will work closely with parents should attendance/punctuality give cause for concern.

#### **(b) Parents**

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible. A child's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received from the parents. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making doctors /dental appointments for their child during school hours.

### **MONITORING**

Attendance will be monitored by the class teacher, Year Leaders, DSL and Headteacher. The class teacher monitors their class register daily and regular communication should take place with parents to provide support where necessary. Any child arriving into their classroom after the register has been taken will be marked as 'Late'. If this is later authorised this will not impact the child's attendance record however the class teacher should monitor this and speak to parents where necessary. Parents should be reminded that any

unauthorised late marks or absences will impact their child's overall attendance figures.

Where a child is persistently late or absent the following actions will be taken:

### **Weekly**

Parents of children with 3 or more late marks in a week without prior authorisation will be spoken to by the class teacher to review reasons and any additional support required. (see Appendix B – example letters to parents). The class teacher will continue to monitor the situation and liaise with the parents where necessary. Additional advice may also be provided by the Year Group Leader.

### **Half termly**

Class registers are monitored half termly by the DSL and Headteacher to identify any regular patterns of absence or lateness. The school asks for full attendance and anything below 90% will automatically be followed up by the Year Leader / DSL / Headteacher.

Should absences / lateness continue a referral may be made to the Local Authorities Educational Welfare Officer.

### **STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE/PUNCTUALITY**

- Pilgrims School will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The School's ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.
- Parents will be regularly reminded (via newsletters, the school prospectus, parents' evening, etc) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Parents will be informed of their child's attendance record at Parents Consultation evening and in their end of year reports.
- Absences and late attendance will be monitored each half term by the Headteacher. Where necessary reminders will then be issued to parents.

**Additional information in relation to attendance can be found via:**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance/addendum-recording-attendance-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19-during-the-2021-to-2022-academic-year>

## APPENDIX A

### MARKING OF ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

The pupils' Registration Regulations (S1 1956 No.357) states that there must be an attendance register for each class or form or group containing the names of all the pupils in the class. It must be marked during the time set apart for registration in the timetable at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session at which secular instruction is given. The Educational (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991 further require that all schools must distinguish in their attendance register between authorised and unauthorised absences of pupils of compulsory school age. The guidance in this document has been updated as at August 2006 to take account of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect on 1 September 2006. It has been further updated in line with expectations relating to Covid-19 for the academic year 2020-21.

#### THE CODES

/ \	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
D	Dual registration (ie pupil attending another establishment)
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)
F	Extended Family Holiday (agreed)
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)
J	Interview
M	Medical/dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence (not covered by another other code/description)
L	Unauthorised / Late
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registration closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
Y	Enforced closure
Z	Pupil not on roll
#	School closed to pupils

#### **Covid-19 Codes:**

- X. Pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (Covid-19)'. This code will continue to be used for non-compulsory school aged children who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before outbreak.

Children attending school visits should be marked as present.  
Parents should notify the office of any changes in address / telephone number etc.  
Messages with regards to attendance must be noted on the class register.

**APPENDIX B**

Example of reminder from class teacher

Date

Dear Parent

I am writing to remind you that the school day starts at 8.45am. Following our conversation, I have noticed that (name of child) has arrived late of (number of occasions) this half term. It is important that all children arrive promptly otherwise they miss the start of the day. Late arrivals are also disruptive for the rest of the class.

If you do have occasion to be late it is important that you sign in at Reception. Please contact me if there are any particular reasons for (name of child) arriving late.

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher

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Second reminder if lateness continues -

Date

Dear Parent

It has been brought to my attention that since (name of class teacher) wrote to you on (date of reminder) we have noticed that (name of child) has continued to arrive late on (number of occasions between first letter and this one) further occasions.

When pupils are persistently late it can significantly impact their start to the day. It can be unsettling for both (Name of child) and the other children in the class. Punctuality is also a legal requirement and is part of our terms and conditions.

May I ask that you make every attempt to bring (name of child) to school on time, if there is a particular reason why you are unable to do this please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Year Leader