



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Attendance and Punctuality is the responsibility of all staff, parents, pupils and governors. For sustained improvement and to ensure that the children get the maximum benefit from their entitlement to education, attendance issues are shared, given high profile and are underpinned by the school ethos and mission statement. At Didsbury CE and West Didsbury CE we have adopted strategies to actively promote good attendance and punctuality.

Good attendance.....

- Leads to good levels of achievement.
- Establishes positive patterns for future learning in life and work.
- Builds self confidence.
- Allows your child to make good friendships and flourish socially.
- Promotes a happy positive attitude to school.
- Helps your child to feel part of the school community, to feel valued and develop his or her skills, interests and abilities to the full.

Remember: If you value your child's education, then so will your child.

SCHOOL START TIME

8.50 AM

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES ARE ALWAYS INVESTIGATED.

Taking your child on holiday during term time is an unauthorised absence. The Headteacher or Head of School will only authorise term time absence in exceptional circumstances.

Legally.....parents have the responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered as a pupil. Failure to do so

may lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court under section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. We always try to work together to resolve attendance problems without court action, but sometimes it is necessary to prosecute parents.

DIDSBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

WEST DIDSBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Procedures for Monitoring School Attendance.

Punctuality

- **If a child arrives late, the parent/carer or child must go to the office to register.**
- **The child will then receive their mark in the register.**
- **Medical appointment must be authorised with a letter from parents, card from your G.P., Hospital, Dentist etc.**

If lateness becomes regular, parents will be given a letter asking that the situation improves. If no improvement is apparent, parents will be asked to come into school to discuss the matter.

Attendance

- **The registers are checked at approximately 9.20 am.**
- **If a child is absent the parent must contact the school by 10 am. on the first day of absence and record the reason for absence. Should we not have heard from you on the first day, then we will call you to find out why your child is not in school.**
- **When your child returns to school a letter must be received explaining your child's absence from school.**

Authorised absences are as follows:-

- **Genuine illness**
- **Unavoidable medical appointments**
- **Recognised religious observance**
- **Bereavement**

Unauthorised absences are as follows:-

- **Days off on birthdays**
- **Shopping**
- **Holidays**
- **Looking after brothers or sisters.**

If absence becomes regular, parents will be given a letter asking that the Situation improves. If no improvement is apparent, parents will be asked to come to school to discuss the matter. If the issue cannot be resolved by the school, the LEA Attendance Advisor will make a home visit.

West Didsbury CE/Didsbury CE procedures to promote good attendance

Didsbury CE and West Didsbury CE will take part in LA and national schemes to promote good attendance and the school have adopted the following steps to support families with poor attendance.

Sanctions to deal with late arrivals.

There will be regular reminders to all parents about the importance of punctuality in the school newsletter.

- **School internal monitoring of attendance will inform us of children who are regularly late. A letter (see appendix a) will be sent home.**
- **Should the letter home not improve matters then parents will be asked to come into school to discuss the matter.**
- **Should the matter still not improve then the school will do a home visit using our Parent Support Adviser.**
- **If matters still do not improve then the school will buy in specialist attendance support from the attendance service to help work with the family.**

Sanctions to deal with poor attendance.

There will be regular reminders to all parents about the importance of good attendance in the school newsletter.

- **School internal monitoring of attendance will inform us of children who have an attendance rate of less than 85%. A letter (see appendix b) will be sent home.**
- **Should the letter home not improve matters then parents will be asked to come into school to discuss the matter.**
- **Should the matter still not improve then the school will do a home visit using our Parent Support Adviser.**
- **If matters still do not improve then the school will buy in specialist attendance support from the attendance service to help work with the family and if necessary initiate CAF proceedings and a parenting contract.**

- **Warning letter about possible penalty notice or prosecution.**

Sanctions to deal with persistent absence.

There will be regular reminders to all parents about the importance of good attendance in the school newsletter.

- **School internal monitoring of attendance will inform us of children who are persistent absentees. A letter (see appendix c) will be sent home.**
- **The letter home will ask parents to come into school to discuss the matter and a support plan will be drawn up together with parents and our (Parent Support Adviser) PSA.**
- **Should the matter still not improve then the school will do a home visit using our Parent Support Adviser and Headteacher.**
- **If matters still do not improve then the school will buy in specialist attendance support from the attendance service to help work with the family.**
- **Warning letter about possible penalty notice or prosecution.**
- **If necessary then court action will be initiated.**

Didsbury CE and West Didsbury CE Primary Schools follow the Manchester Attendance Strategy guidelines on managing leave of absence (extended absence), absence for religious observance and removing a pupil from the attendance register.

Any request for absence for exceptional circumstances must be for less than 10 days absence, made in writing and an exemplar letter authorising the request is attached in Appendix D

EXTENDED LEAVE REQUESTS – anything more than 10 days absence

Every extended leave request must be made on the extended leave proforma (see Appendix E) which has been personalised for our school from the Manchester Children's Service guidelines. Please ensure that the proforma is filled in and returned to school at least a term before your request for absence to enable the healthy schools sub-committee of our Governing Body to consider its response. It is essential that the date of return is filled in on the proforma, as only the specific dates requested may be authorised and any additional days absence would be unauthorised and could lead to either your child being removed from the school roll or a Penalty Notice being issued.

The healthy Schools sub-committee will either sanction or refuse the request, and each request will be considered on its own merits. The decision will be final, and there will be no right to appeal. You are strongly encouraged to submit any supporting information (e.g. reference from employers, church, place of worship) at the time of submitting the extended leave proforma. Any information sent subsequently may not be taken into account.

Possible reasons for sanctioning the request could be:

1. Religious observance
2. Unavoidable work commitments which involve all the family
3. Compassionate grounds
4. Mission work
5. Traveller's child – as stated in section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Balanced against this is the huge demand for places at our school, and the possibility of us holding a place open for a child who may not return to the school. For this reason we are unable to sanction any request for extended leave which is greater than 40 consecutive school days.

For the Governing Body responses we have attached sample letters authorising the request (see Appendix F) and not authorising the request (see Appendix G)

Dear Parent

I am sorry to write to you under these circumstances, but unfortunately during our attendance monitoring it has become apparent that your child has arrived late for school on a number of occasions this term.

I am sure you are aware that school opens at 8.45am, registration is at 8.50am and our first lesson begins at 8.55am. Therefore your child is missing out on valuable lesson time as a result of their late arrival. This disrupts their learning and the learning of all their classmates, whose lesson is disrupted by the late arrival.

As part of our desire to promote good attendance, we felt it necessary to inform you of this and ask for your support in promoting good attendance and punctuality. We firmly believe that high levels of attendance and punctuality are important, as we make clear in our attendance policy.

Good attendance.....

- **Leads to good levels of achievement.**
- **Establishes positive patterns for future learning in life and work.**
- **Builds self confidence.**
- **Allows your child to make good friendships and flourish socially.**
- **Promotes a happy positive attitude to school.**
- **Helps your child to feel part of the school community, to feel valued and develop his or her skills, interests and abilities to the full.**

Please try to ensure that your child is in school punctually for the start of the school day to prevent further disruption to their learning.

Should you have any concerns regarding this matter, please contact school and arrange a meeting to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

M.Whitehead

Headteacher

Dear Parent

I am sorry to write to you under these circumstances, but unfortunately during our attendance monitoring it has become apparent that your child has an attendance rate of less than 85%.

We are aware that all of these absences are authorised and the vast majority are unavoidable, as a result of illness. We have attached your child's current attendance record.

However, as part of our desire to promote good attendance we felt it necessary to inform you of this and ask for your support in promoting good attendance. We firmly believe that high levels of attendance are important, as we make clear in our attendance policy.

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Should you have any concerns regarding this matter, please contact school and arrange a meeting to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

M.Whitehead
Headteacher

St James & Emmanuel Academy Trust

The logo for St James & Emmanuel Academy Trust features a green shield with a blue cross and a pink and orange stylized figure.

Didsbury CE
Primary School

The logo for Didsbury CE Primary School includes a blue cross inside a white square.

West Didsbury CE
Primary School

The logo for West Didsbury CE Primary School includes a green cross inside a white square.

Dear Parent

I am sorry to write to you under these circumstances, but unfortunately during our attendance monitoring it has become apparent that your child has an attendance rate of less than 90%. This level of attendance is identified as persistently absent by the Department for Education and is in a high risk group.

We have attached your child's current attendance record.

We are keen to help you support your child to improve this level of attendance and with this in mind we are happy to have a joint meeting in school should you wish to make an appointment and discuss this matter.

We firmly believe that high levels of attendance are important, as we make clear in our attendance policy.

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Should you have any concerns regarding this matter, please contact school and discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

M.Whitehead

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West Didsbury CE
Primary School

The logo for West Didsbury CE Primary School includes a green cross icon.

Dear

**Thank you for your letter requesting time off for
in term time from**

**Neither the Government nor the Governing Body of this school
condone absence in school time.**

**I am only in a position to grant up to 10 days authorised absence for
exceptional circumstances in one school year.**

This request is granted.

**Please note, that as you are requesting an absence for exceptional
circumstances, no homework will be set for your child by the class
teacher.**

Yours sincerely,

**Matt Whitehead
Headteacher**

APPENDIX E: Application for leave of absence from school

Regular school attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. We expect all parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school whenever possible. Absences due to holidays taken in term-time can impact on your child's progress.

If you wish to apply for your child to be absent from school, please complete this form and return it to school at least two weeks before your intended departure/absence date. Requests for leave of absence will be considered in line with our policy and will not automatically be authorised. Holiday requests will be unauthorised as a result of statutory changes from Sept. 1st 2013.

If your child is absent from school because they are on holiday and this leave of absence has not been authorised or they do not return to school on the agreed due date, you may be issued with a penalty notice of £60 rising to £120. Your child may also be at risk of losing their school place.

PARENT'S SECTION

Surname of child First name
.....

Date of birth Year group
.....

Surname of parent/carer First name
.....

Relationship to child
.....

Surname of parent/carer First name
.....

Relationship to child
.....

Home address
.....

Home telephone Parent's mobile Pupil's Mobile
.....

Reason for request
.....
.....
.....

Length of absence (number of school days)..... Destination

.....

Date of departure Date due back in school

.....

Emergency telephone contact in Manchester

.....

Parent/carer's signature

.....

SCHOOL SECTION

Date of meeting with parent(s) Leave approved? Yes

No

Number of days approved Headteacher's signature

.....

Number of date(s) of previous applications granted

.....

School Year Duration of absence

.....

School Year Duration of absence

.....

Reason for refusal/authorisation (delete as appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX F: Sample letter authorising leave of absence

(Insert date)

Dear (insert full name of parent – letter should be sent to each individual parent)

Request for exceptional leave in term-time

We have considered your request for leave in term-time and We have agreed to grant permission

on this occasion for the following reasons:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Your child(ren) (insert names and dates of birth of pupils) will be marked absent from (insert start date) to (insert end date)

He/she/they are expected to return to school on (insert date of return)

If your child does not return to school on this date, further absences will not be authorised. This means that you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice of £60 is payable within the first 28 days and rises to £120 thereafter. The Trust will take legal action if Penalty Notices are not paid within 42 days of date of issue. Legal action may result in a fine of up to £2500 and a criminal record for each parent.

Your child may lose their school place if they do not return to school after the agreed date. You will then be required to reapply for your child(ren)'s absence will be authorised on this occasion, you are requested to take future leave during school holidays. Future requests for further leave in term-time may not be authorised.

A copy of this letter will be placed on your child(ren)'s school file.

Yours sincerely,

APPENDIX G: Sample letter not authorising leave of absence

(Insert date)

Dear (insert full name of parent – letter should be sent to each individual parent)

Refusal for exceptional leave in term-time

We have considered your request for leave in term-time and on this occasion we will not be authorising your child's absence.

This is because (insert reason)

(Consider the following)

- The age of the child-the child has just started reception, moved to a new class, just moved to the school or is in Year 6
- The time of year proposed for the trip-the first week of term, exam/SATs week in school, time of school residential.
- The overall attendance pattern of your child-children/young people with attendance below 95 percent have already missed a considerable amount of school
- Your child's stage of education and a progress-if he/she is already showing indications of poor progress.
- All holiday requests will result in unauthorised absence.

You are requested to take leave during school holidays.

If your child does not attend school during the dates you requested (insert dates) the absences will be recorded as unauthorised and a request to issue you with a Penalty Notice will be made.

A Penalty Notice of £60 is payable within the first 28 days and rises to £120 thereafter. The Local Authority will take legal action if Penalty Notices are not paid within 42 days of date of issue. Legal action may result in a fine of up to £2500 and a criminal record for each parent.

A copy of this letter will be placed on your child(ren)'s school file.

Yours sincerely,