



Attendance Policy

Date: September 2023
Review date: September 2026

The Pioneer Vision

The Pioneer Academy promotes and achieves excellence for children. It recognises the importance of outstanding teaching and learning by actively encouraging creativity and innovation, whilst having consistent standards of behaviour and attendance. Treating everyone as equal, whilst celebrating diversity, is a non-negotiable; protecting all through safeguarding, health and safety and welfare is paramount.

The Pioneer Academy Expectations

We are a multi-academy trust that has high expectations in all areas and attendance is no exception. Regular attendance is a key factor to children achieving their very best whilst at school and this means being in school, on time every day. Parental attitude is a key influence on a child's school attendance and there is much they can do to encourage, even reluctant pupils, to attend. We will work with and support parents to ensure pupils are in school every day ready to learn. Every day counts!

Pioneer Rationale

All Pioneer schools seek to ensure that every pupil receives a full-time education. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. Research demonstrates a clear link between good attainment and good attendance. We strive to make all of our schools a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

The Law on Attendance

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their children are 'properly educated, either at school or otherwise'. Children must remain in full-time education for as long as they are of compulsory school age. There is no entitlement for pupils to be granted leave of absence for holidays during term time. Under the Education Regulations (1995), the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. The register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Attendance Targets

Each Pioneer school is set a challenging attendance target each year. These targets are set by the Headteacher and monitored by the Governing Body. The Headteacher will report on attendance in the termly report to the Governing Body.

Monitoring Attendance

Pupil attendance will be monitored regularly by the school's attendance officer who will make the Headteacher and/or the Educational Welfare Officer aware of any immediate concerns regarding the attendance or punctuality of individual pupils. Letters will be sent to those parents where their child's attendance falls below 96% and/or if punctuality is a cause for concern. If no improvements are seen, meetings will take place to support parents where needed. These meetings may also include the Educational Welfare Officer who supports the Pioneer schools regarding attendance.

Rewarding Good Attendance

The Pioneer Academy promotes the need for good attendance to ensure every child has the best opportunity to achieve their full potential whilst in school. Schools within the Pioneer Academy understand how important it is to recognise and reward good attendance and this is achieved in a number of ways including; Best Class attendance award every week, 100% attendance award for pupils who are in school every day for the term and also for pupils who are in school every day for the whole academic year.

Teachers and staff will build a 'culture' within the school of the importance of good attendance and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

The trust policy takes account of relevant requirements, good practice and is compliant for a trust wide policy.

The key aims are met

- **Promoting good attendance**
- **Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education**
- **Acting early to address patterns of absence**
- **Supporting parents to perform their legal duty**



Halstead Community Primary School

Attendance Procedures

Halstead Community Primary School Vision

At Halstead Community Primary School, everyone takes pride in demonstrating respect and kindness. In our inclusive, nurturing environment, we inspire and challenge our children through memorable learning experiences. We build a flourishing family which embraces individuality and independence where everyone can succeed.

‘Everybody different, everybody equal.’

Registration

- We operate a ‘soft’ start. The school doors open at approximately 8.40am and children are welcomed to their classroom between 8.40am and 8.50am when the bell goes to start the school day. Electronic registration is used in all year groups and taken twice per day at **8.50am** and **1.15pm**. A school day counts as 2 marks of attendance.
- Morning registration ends at 8:50am if a pupil arrives after this time he/she should be accompanied by the parent to the main reception where they will be recorded as late and the time of arrival noted. Any pupil arriving after 9.30am will become an unauthorised absentee and marked as absent for the whole of the morning session.
- It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/carer outside the normal school hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in/out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

Punctuality

- It is essential that children arrive in school on time giving them a positive start to their day. When pupils arrive late they miss important information relating to their learning and disturb the lesson which has already begun.
- The school day begins at 8.50am and ends at 3.15pm. Please be prompt when bringing your child into school and collecting them.
- Punctuality is monitored closely and offenders will receive a letter after a pupil has been late on 5 occasions or more
- Parents/carers of persistent offenders will be invited to meet the EWO or Headteacher to explore if the school can offer any support and put together an action plan for improvement
- Any pupils arriving after 9.30am will be marked as absent.

Absence

- Parents and carers are requested to telephone the school on the first day of absence, before 9.30am where possible, to report their child’s absence. Parents should ring 01959 532224, to report their child absent, providing the child’s name, class and reason for absence.
- If the school has not been informed of the reason why a pupil is absent on the first day of absence, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent/carer.
- If there is any doubt regarding the whereabouts of a child, the school will contact the parent/carer by telephone in order to ascertain the safety of the child.

- If your child is absent for more than one day you will need to inform the school office each morning for the duration of the absence. **This information is required as part of our safeguarding procedure and our responsibility to ensuring the safety of your child**
- To ensure the safety of all pupils, contact details need to be kept up to date by supplying the school office with any change of address or home and mobile telephone number

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. Please note only the school can authorise an absence, parents do not have this authority.

Examples of authorised absence are;

- genuine sickness supported by proof of illness where possible,
- unavoidable Medical/Dental appointments (a copy of the appointment letter/card will be required),
- Family bereavement and days of religious observation (a letter to the Headteacher will be required).

Unauthorised Absence

This is where the school has not received information from the parent/carers regarding the absence *or* where the reason for the absence is one that the school cannot authorise, examples of this are;

- waiting for the Gas Board or a delivery
- Shopping or birthday treat

Where necessary, the parent/carers will be contacted to clarify the circumstances for the repeated absences.

Requests for leave during Term Time

A request for leave during term time will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and be granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. Leave during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning and is not an entitlement. One of the worst times for a child to be absent is at the beginning of a new school year, particularly with a new teacher or a new class, and for year 6 pupils in the build up to and during the National Curriculum tests therefore, it is strongly discouraged by the Government, School Governors and the Headteacher.

All requests for leave during term time should be put in writing and submitted to the school office for the Headteacher to consider the request before any arrangements are made as authorisation will not be granted retrospectively. Any absence for leave that has not been agreed by the Headteacher will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. The absence could also be referred to the Education Welfare Officer and may be subject to a fine. ***Any leave requested during SATs week will not be authorised and will be subject to a fine as detailed below.***

Penalty Notice

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has the power to fine and prosecute parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. Parents who fail to ensure their children attend school regularly without good reason could:

- Receive a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent per pupil which rises to £120 if payment is not made within 21 days;

- If the fine is not paid after 28 days, parents run the risk of being prosecuted in the magistrate's court and be fined up to £1000.

Holidays

The law regarding 'Holidays in term time' changed in 2013. The Education (Pupil Registration, England amendment) Regulations 2013 amend the 2006 Regulations to clarify that leave of absence during term time shall not be granted unless there are "exceptional circumstances".

Holidays during term time will not be authorised and on the advice of the Educational Welfare Officer, may be subject to a fine as detailed above.

To have a week's winter or summer holiday in school time, because the cost is cheaper, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Long Term Absence of 5 Consecutive days - If your child has an illness that means they will be away from school for over 5 consecutive school days, medical evidence will need to be provided (e.g this may be a copy of a prescription)

10 Consecutive days - If your child is absent for 10 consecutive school days, on the 10th day the Attendance Officer will submit a '**Child Missing in Education**' form to the local authority. This will be done as part of our safe-guarding procedure and our responsibility to ensuring the safety of that child. The Education Welfare Office will also be informed and will carry out a home visit
The school can send material home to enable your child to keep up with school work. Please speak to your child's class teacher regarding this or the school office to arrange for this to be organised.

Illness and Medical Appointments

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours. The school would encourage all parents to make appointments first thing in the morning or late in the afternoon however, we are aware that appointments during school time are sometimes unavoidable. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

Following an episode of vomiting or diarrhoea pupils are requested to remain away from school for a **period of 48 hrs.** This is in line with guidance from the Health Protection Agency for Schools and Childcare Settings and helps to reduce the spread of infection between pupils.

Monitoring of Attendance

Daily monitoring is carried out by the Attendance Officer who will bring any concerns regarding a pupil's attendance to the Headteacher's attention. The school will seek to resolve any problems regarding a pupil's attendance as early as possible.

The Headteacher and the EWO meet each half term to monitor pupil attendance and punctuality.

Attendance at 95% or below

If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences and/or their attendance falls below 95% the parents will be written to as follows:

- 'letter1' will be sent to inform the parent of this and reinforce school policy;
- 'letter 2' will be sent to parents if after a further monitoring period there has been no improvement;

- 'letter 3' will be sent to persistent offenders inviting parents in to meet with the Headteacher to explore if the school can offer any support. An action plan for improvement will be put together.

Attendance at 90% or below

If a child's attendance fails to improve and falls to 90% or below, they will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer. . If there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance and parents and carers repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school, the school has the right to consider legal action. Therefore, it is important that parents and carers work with the school in order to resolve any difficulties early before any legal action becomes necessary.

Repeated Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences remain on the child's attendance record.

Rewards for Attendance

Halstead Community Primary School has established an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils and parents to improve their attendance and timekeeping. Good attendance is celebrated at Attendance assembly on a weekly basis. The Family Worker will work with the Attendance Officer to identify children for individual targets/rewards. In addition, the following whole school and individual rewards are in place:

Weekly – The class with the highest attendance are celebrated at an assembly and on a display.

100% Attendance end of the year - All pupils who have achieved a 100% attendance for the whole academic year will be awarded an attendance certificate