



# Attendance Policy

January 2019  
Updated September 2021  
Updated March 2022  
Updated May 22- new EWS

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NB-Letters are included as examples and may be adapted or alternatives sent from our Education Welfare Service-Education Welfare Advisory and Support Services.

## Introduction

**There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance and achievement.**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 28: Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free.

As a parent/carer it is your legal responsibility, under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure your child attends school regularly and punctually. Regular school attendance is essential and parents/carers, pupils and teachers all have their part to play in ensuring this happens. It is essential that the school is informed of any reasons for absence. Under current Government legislation, unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy and all absence figures have to be reported to the Local Authority (LA), the Department for Education, as well as to the school's Governing Body. Attendance is a key safeguarding issue in school and is treated as a safeguarding priority.

Attendance is also recorded on a pupil's annual school report. It is important that pupils arrive on time for school, as learning starts straight away. When a child moves to a new school their attendance information is passed on as part of their educational record.

Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absences:

1. **Authorised absence:** when the Headteacher (or her nominated representative) approves a pupil's absence, for example illness.
2. **Unauthorised absence:** when the Headteacher (or her nominated representative) will not approve, for example a family holiday during term time or when a suitable explanation for the absence is not provided.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents/carers, Manford Primary School, its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

## School Practice

The school follows the Government and Borough guidelines on attendance.

- Registers are taken at 9.00am and at the start of the afternoon session daily.

- The school office contact all families of children who are not in school and whose parents have not explained the absence (by a text message and sometimes a phone call)
- At the end of each week any unexplained absence is followed with a letter requesting a reason for the absence.
- Each fortnight the Education Welfare Officer comes into school to discuss pupils' attendance and any concerns.
- Where we can not make contact with a family and the reason for absence is unknown we may undertake a home visit. In such cases the Local Authority is notified that a child is 'Missing Education' and will investigate.
- If a pupil is going to be absent from school for a long period of time and unable to attend school at all (e.g. due to a broken leg or similar circumstances), a referral for home tuition can be made via the borough of residence. Please contact the school office in these circumstances.

No holiday during term time will be authorised. Similarly, medical evidence will need to be provided when a child is absent just before or just after a school holiday. Redbridge LA will issue penalty notices for leave of absence taken without the permission of the Headteacher as a supplement to the existing sanctions currently available under Section 444 Education Act 1996 or section 36 Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate.

This may be for:-

1. 12 unauthorised sessions in any 12-school week period.
2. Leave of absence taken without the permission of the Headteacher.
3. **Punctuality**

In cases of persistent lateness a Headteacher can apply to the LA to issue a penalty notice, though a notice will not normally be issued unless the child concerned has had 7 or more lates (after the close of registration) in a 6 school week period

Attendance and persistent absence data is shared with the Governing Body termly. Their role is to ensure that the school is doing everything possible to secure good attendance and punctuality. There are example letters at the end of this policy.

### **Lateness**

The school day begins at 8.50 a.m. and all pupils are expected to be in school at this time, although the doors open at 8.40am to allow for a staggered start. Registers open at 9.00 a.m. and close at 9.30 a.m. A pupil receives a late mark if they are not in their classroom by the time the class register is taken at 9.00 a.m. unless prior notice is given, e.g. a doctor's appointment. In that situation the pupil is given a medical mark.

Any pupil arriving later than 9.00 a.m. must report to the school office, they should enter via the main playground entrance in Arrowsmith Road until 9.00 a.m., after this the gates will be locked and they will be expected to enter through the visitor's entrance by the main office on Manford Way.

Arrival after 9.30 when registers 'close' results in an unauthorised absence for the whole morning.

Lateness is considered to be a serious absence. Parents/carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness are reminded about the importance of good time-keeping by a letter being sent home. A penalty notice may be issued when a child arrives late to school on 7 or more occasions over a 6-week period in line with the Redbridge Code of Conduct. If a child is persistently late then a penalty fine may be issued. Penalty notices are issued at £120 per parent, per child. If paid within 21 days the penalty is reduced to £60 per parent, per child.

We celebrate good and improving attendance and punctuality with:

- Recognition in weekly assemblies
- Termly badges to collect (will be re-introduced Summer 2022)
- An end of year celebration (re-introduced September 2022)
- Postcards or 'Marvellous Me' notifications and letters home

We work with children and families to improve attendance and punctuality through:

- Meetings and conversations to identify the reasons and agree solutions
- Funded breakfast club places (depending on circumstances)
- Working with outside agencies to support
- Bespoke reward systems
- Wake-up calls home
- Engaging the services of the Education Welfare Officer

#### **The monitoring Process in school:**

- Daily monitoring of absence by office staff and teachers
- Weekly missing mark check
- When a child's attendance drops to 90% - a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer. Weekly monitoring will begin
- Where a child has 12 unauthorised absences in a 12 week period a penalty notice may be issued
- Where a child is persistently late - 7 times in a half term then a penalty notice may be issued
- Where a child has a history of low attendance or poor punctuality fortnightly monitoring will usually be in place for the following academic year



Date:

Dear Parent / Carer

On checking our records we notice that ..... was absent from school on the dates below and we have not received any reason. This means that your child's record is showing an unauthorised absence from school. There is now a borough directive that if a pupil has 12 or more unauthorised absences from school (6 days) they may issue a penalty notice of £120 per parent per child reduced to £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. This also applies to pupils who are consistently late for school 7 or more times in a half term.

Date of absence	Reason for absence

I would be grateful if you would please complete the reason in the box and return it to the school office as soon as possible.

We will then be able to change our records accordingly

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher**

**Manford Way, Chigwell, Essex. IG7 4BX  
 020 8500 2143**





Date:

Dear Parent / Carer

It has been noticed that your child has been late for school on more than one occasion this week. As you are aware this causes disruption to your child's class and means that they are missing out on vital information.

There is now a borough directive, if a pupil is late 7 or more times in a half term they may issue a penalty notice of £120 per parent per child, reduced to £60 per parent if paid within 21 days.

As you are aware we are monitored closely on our attendance and punctuality at Manford Primary and it is now necessary for us to follow this directive and issue a penalty notice if a child is consistently late. Therefore, please make sure that you make every effort to get your child to school on time each day, this means being in the playground at 8.55 a.m. ready for when the bell rings at 9 a.m. If you are travelling by bus or car you must leave plenty of time to allow for traffic and parking.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher**

**Manford Way, Chigwell, Essex. IG7 4BX  
020 8500 2143**



**Headteacher: Mrs J Donnelly**

Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to the new school year. It has come to my attention that your child (NAMEs) attendance was lower than it should have been in the last academic year.

We would like to support you in improving that record in the new year. If there is any way we can help or support you with attendance/punctuality then please get in touch.

I will be monitoring your child's attendance closely and look forward to seeing them in school regularly.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher.**



Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to the new school year. Whilst last year was difficult it is really important all children attend school regularly. It has come to my attention that your child (**NAMES**) attendance was lower than it should have been in the last academic year-we tracked attendance from the end of the lockdown on March 8<sup>th</sup> until the end of the Summer term.

We would like to support you in improving that record in the new year. If there is any way we can help or support you with attendance/punctuality then please get in touch.

I, along with Ms Morris, our new attendance officer, will be monitoring your child's attendance closely and look forward to seeing them in school regularly.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher.**

**Manford Way, Chigwell, Essex. IG7 4BX**  
**020 8500 2143**  
**[www.manfordprimary.co.uk](http://www.manfordprimary.co.uk)**



Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attendance Stage 1

Your child's attendance is a concern. All pupils should aim for 100% attendance, (NAME) attendance is.....% they have missed .....sessions of school. We will continue to monitor (NAMEs) attendance closely.

We are committed to working in partnership with you. Please ensure you make any appointments outside school hours. If there is a particular reason why your child misses school and you would like some help or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher.**

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Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attendance Stage 3

Your child's attendance is now very low-they have missed..... school sessions.

In order to authorise any absence from school as illness we will now require medical evidence. This can be provided as a note from your GP or hospital or a current prescription/prescribed medication related to the absence.

We will no longer be authorising any absence without this information. Unauthorised absence can lead to a penalty notice being issued.....details

I hope to be in touch to congratulate you on the improved attendance soon. However, should attendance drop to 90% or below your child will be classed as 'Persistently Absent' and the Education Welfare Officer for our school will take up the case to support improvement.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher**

**Manford Way, Chigwell, Essex. IG7 4BX**  
**020 8500 2143**  
**[www.manfordprimary.co.uk](http://www.manfordprimary.co.uk)**



Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attendance Stage 4

Your child's attendance has fallen below the Government's minimum of 90% and they are considered persistently absent.

The case will now be referred to the Education welfare Officer to support you in improving attendance for (NAME).

Please be aware a penalty notice may be issued for unauthorised absence. Fines are issued at £120 per parent, per child. If paid within 21 days this is reduced to £60 per parent, per child.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Donnelly  
**Headteacher.**

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