


Attendance Policy	
DATE OF ADOPTION: January 2018	
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: January 2020	
TO BE REVIEWED BY: Business and Management Committee	

Philosophy

Decoy Community Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils.

- We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be addressed as speedily as possible.
- It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.
- Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.
- If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

Objectives

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies
- to minimise its occurrence
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school/college

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

Absences During Term Time

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.

Principles

- Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.
- We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
- We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed.
- We will consult with all members of the school community and the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.
- We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance.
- We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.
- Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues.
- We will promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence and will ensure regular evaluation of the attendance policy and procedures by Senior Managers and the school governors.
- Attendance will be an important feature of the school Improvement Plan.
- Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

Procedures

- The school will work in close partnership with the Educational Welfare Service in all aspects of this attendance policy.
- Morning registration will be between 8.55am and 9.15am. Afternoon registration will be between 13.15pm and 13.20pm. Registers will be completed and processed following Devon County guidelines using the recommended coding structure.
- Pupils will be reminded of the importance of punctuality and will be praised for arriving at school in good time.
- Parents will be asked to contact the school before 9.30am on the first morning of an absence. The school will make first day contact with anyone who has not informed the school of the absence.
- Both authorised and unauthorised absence will be recorded in-line with County guidance.
- Attendance will be monitored by the school Attendance Officer, who will advise the Headteacher of any pupils with emerging attendance problems, and subsequently refer them to the Educational Welfare Officer.
- Pupils with good attendance will be rewarded on a regular basis.
- Progress towards targets will be monitored in conjunction with the Educational Welfare service
- Repeated absence, which may lead to a prosecution and fine, will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service.
- Attendance information is included in the school prospectus and individual information is included on pupil's annual report.

- Everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the importance of promoting regular attendance. This is the responsibility of the whole school community.

Submitting a request for an authorised absence

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. A request for absence in term time can only be made by an adult who has legal Parental Responsibility and be the parent with whom the child normally lives. Permission must be sought in advance and where it is related to a holiday, before the holiday is booked.

When deciding whether to allow term time leave, for any reason, the school will consider:

- Whether the reason/s for the request is exceptional
- Previous absence record

No “exceptional circumstance” will be authorised for the following times:

Year 6 pupils during Year 6 SATS week: Week beginning Monday 14th May 2018

Year 1 pupils during the Year 1 phonics screening week: Week beginning Monday 11th June 2018

All absence requests must be applied for using the school absence request form. Further information is on this form regarding absence requests.

WARNING: If the school refuses an absence request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and this may make the parent(s) liable to a £60/120 fine. It is now Devon County Council policy to issue Penalty Notices or fines for unauthorised absence. Penalty Notices will require the parent of a child of compulsory school age, to pay a fine, currently £60.00 per parent for each child if paid within 21 day, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days. These Penalty Notices, which can result in a criminal record, can be issued for unauthorised holidays within term time and unauthorised absence from school when the circumstances appear to have been avoidable, (e.g. child too tired after a late night, a birthday treat, family friends/relatives visiting).

See <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance> for the latest information regarding fines.