



Policy Focus	Attendance Policy
Lead Policy Holder	R Banks - Principal
Designated Advisory Board	Jill Bainton
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Version Control since June 2022

Version	Date of Change/Adopted	Reviewed by	Reason for change
1.0	June 2022	R Banks/Jill Bainton	New document
1.1	October 2024	L Secker	Fines updated accordingly

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1. Policy Intent

Phoenix Bay School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all students. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school, we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Phoenix Bay School will give a high priority to conveying to parent/carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parent/carers 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 student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

If a child is absent from school (unexplained), the student's Teacher will ensure a phone call is made to the family home on the first day of absence to ascertain the reason for it. The school will use all the contact numbers available if the primary contact cannot be reached.

If the child is absent from school (unexplained) for 5 consecutive days, the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a total of 10 days, the family will be referred as a CME case for the Local Authority. If there are Safeguarding concerns, the named social worker and/or MASH will be contacted on the first day of absence.

2. Statutory Duty of schools

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

Under the Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a student's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Where the request for leave was not agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice (parents must, from 1st September 2013, pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days). If this penalty is not paid the Local Authority will institute legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

The guidance in The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006 will be followed with regard to deleting students from the Admission Register. The Education Welfare Service (EWO) will be informed of every student deleted from the Admission Register.

If a student is deemed to be missing from education (CME), the guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Service will be followed. This can include a referral to the Education Welfare Officer for investigation.

3. Principles

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly. The national average attendance is 94%. We strive to support students and families to achieve well above average attendance.

We will work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a student is absent, she/he will be missed. We will consult with all members of the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the schools 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 parent/carers and students informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Promoting positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by the Leadership Team.



Appendix 1 – Leave Request

Student Request for Leave During term time

To: The Principal of: Phoenix Bay School

Date:.....

I request consideration of a grant of leave of absence from school during term time for:

My child (full name):.....

For the period from (date):.....

The exceptional circumstances and reason for this request are:

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

Name of Parent/Carer:.....

Signature:.....

Please return completed form to the school office. Phoenix Bay will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

Office Use Only

Current Attendance	%	Last Year's Attendance	%
Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time (this academic year)			

Appendix 2 – Letter 1 High Absence

PARENTAL ADDRESS

ADDRESS

DATE

Absences from school

I'm writing to express my concern at [name's] recent high levels of absence from school.

[His/her] current attendance has fallen to [percentage]. Falling below 95% attendance will likely have an impact on [his/her] academic achievement.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different, and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Our students' welfare is of paramount importance to us, and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We want to make sure that we can support [name's] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help [him/her] to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Please contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss this.

Yours sincerely

Principal

Appendix 3 – Follow up Letter

PARENTAL ADDRESS

ADDRESS

DATE

Unauthorised absences from school

I'm writing to express my concern at [name's] recent unauthorised [absence/absences] from school.

[Name] has been absent from school for a total of [number] unauthorised sessions ([number] days) on the following dates:

[date]

[date]

[date]

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

Amend the line below based on your local authority's code of conduct for penalty notices:

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has more than [number] unauthorised absences within [time period]. You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website, or available from the school office.

Please contact the school office on [number] as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Appendix 4 – Formal Notice

PARENTAL ADDRESSEE

ADDRESS

DATE

Unauthorised absence

With reference to our letter dated [date], [name] has now had a total of [number] unauthorised absences within [time period]. These absences occurred on the following dates:

[date]

[date]

[date]

In line with our attendance policy, and the local authority's code of practice, we have to now request a penalty notice be issued by the local authority.

On receipt of the notice, you must pay:

£80, if paid within 21 days

£160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

We would like to invite you in for a meeting with [appropriate member of staff], so we can discuss how we can support you to help improve [name's] attendance.

Please contact the school office on [number] urgently so we can arrange this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Principal