
Ackton Pastures Primary Academy

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Safeguarding Officers: Mrs K. Mason
Mrs L. Whalley
Miss H. Bartle
Mrs A.M. Stringwell
Miss C. Mensah

'Children at the heart; Inspiring futures'

September, 2023

Dear Parents,

We are writing to reiterate the key areas of IPMAT Trust and Ackton Pastures expectations regarding school attendance.

Absence

In the case of absence, **parents must leave a voicemail on the absence line before 9am**. Please clearly state your child's name, class and reason for absence. This must be done **every day** of absence. In regards to illness, please see attached poster from the NHS – "Should I keep my child off school?" which offers parents some guidance.

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive into school, **via the classroom door between 8.45am and 9am**. Classroom doors will **close at 9.00am**. Any children arriving after 9.00am will need to enter school via the main office and explain the reason for lateness.

Lateness is disruptive to teaching and learning, so it is vital that parents ensure their child arrives at school on time.

Exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher may authorise exceptional circumstances for absence and lateness. However, the reason **must be communicated with school at the earliest opportunity**. Where possible, please aim to book medical appointments outside school hours – we appreciate this can be difficult, but thorough communication with school is appreciated. Sufficient evidence of medical appointments is also required for school to authorise the absence on the registers.

Home visits

As part of the Trust policy on attendance and safeguarding, schools have a responsibility to conduct home visits for **unexplained absence** and when a child has not been seen on school premises – despite reported illness – **for 5 consecutive days (including weekends)**.

The Headteacher is the designated person for all child protection issues

("The School has the right to conduct home visits on the grounds of non-attendance" – see Trust attendance policy, available on school website).

In such instances, two members of staff will visit your child to say hello and offer support if needed. Such procedures have been put into place following well known serious case reviews investigating deaths of children – for instance, Baby P (2007) and Star Hobson (2020). The outcomes of these investigations have found that, had wider agencies – such as schools – followed safeguarding procedures correctly, those deaths could have been prevented. Whilst these cases are incredibly rare, schools and local authorities across the country have a duty of care to check in at home with **any child** – regardless of background and circumstances – who has not been seen on school premises for 5 consecutive days.

On the infrequent occasion where we receive no response at the family home, we will post a calling card notifying you of our visit and an opportunity to rearrange. In instances where the visit is not rearranged, the absence could then be unauthorised. An accumulation of unauthorised absence can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. Please also take this into account if considering notifying school of an illness, when you are on holiday.

Term-time holidays

In accordance with Department of Education legislation from 2013, schools cannot authorise term-time holidays.

"Headteachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application" (see Trust attendance policy and D of E government legislation, available on school website).

Ultimately, it is the decision of the parent whether they wish to take their child out of school for a term-time holiday. However, in such instances, the local authority has a legal obligation to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice when the child returns to school. Discussions can take place with the Headteacher if you feel your circumstances are exceptional.

1. Parents must notify school of their holiday in advance, via email, stating dates of absence.
2. Unauthorised term-time holidays are marked on the register with a G code.
3. After 10 G codes, parents will receive a letter notifying the intent to fine.
4. Fixed Penalty Notice is issued by the local authority.

The school's attendance policy, together with the legislation from Wakefield Council and the Department of Education, are available on our website for you to refer to at any time.

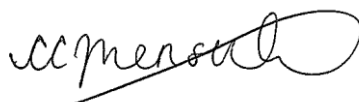
If you have any further queries regarding school attendance, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Miss Mensah who is based in the school office.

We appreciate your continued support.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs K. Mason – Headteacher



Miss C. Mensah – Behaviour & Attendance Officer