



# Attendance Policy 2023-2024



## The Federation of Mount Pleasant Junior School and Maytree Nursery and Infants School

### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

<b>Policy for:</b>	Attendance 2023-2024
<b>Overarching Area:</b>	Attendance
<b>Other policy links:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Child protection and safeguarding policy</li><li>➤ Behaviour policy</li></ul>
<b>Date of Governor Ratification:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	December 2024

- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

- [Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Working Together to Improve Attendance 2023 \(Update\)](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Emma Kerrigan Draper , head teacher ] and can be contacted via 023802236390 [head@mpjs.org.uk](mailto:head@mpjs.org.uk)

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **3.6 School admin staff**

School admin staff will

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents to the Pastoral Lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time .Pupils must arrive in school at 8.40am each school day. Registers are started at 8.50am.
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry

- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

At MNIS Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40 am each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40 and will be kept open until 8.50am

At MPJS Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50 am each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50 and will be kept open until 9.00am

The register for the second session will be taken at 13.00 and will be kept open until 13.10.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

We aim to encourage punctuality at school through:

- Holding regular meetings between the school attendance officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss support and concerns.
- Phoning parents as necessary.

- Meeting with parents and children to discuss concerns.
- Sending letters from either the school or EWO

#### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police if school believe the child is at immediate risk or refer the child to Children's Missing in Education as procedure.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence during parents evening, child's annual school report.

### 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

#### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Executive head teacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The head teacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

**Unauthorised absences** include:

- Any holidays taken during term time
- Visits to relatives – even if stating that they are unwell
- Travelling for weddings
- Other travel which is regarded as non-essential

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Hold regular meetings with the EWO to identify further support needed for families to improve attendance.
- Communicate early issues/concerns with parents.
- Invite parents in for meetings with the headteacher/ Pupil Engagement Officer

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

- Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2)
- . Parents are expected to call the school each day their child is ill and will not be attending school.
- If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.
- If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer (EWO). 7.1

### Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- › Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- › Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- › Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- › Work with the Education Welfare Officer

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- › Child protection and safeguarding policy
- › Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed

<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement




<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations



<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

The table below describes how we categorise attendance:

red	amber			
90% or less	90.1% - 94.9%	95—95.9%	96% or above	100%
Persistent Absence	Poor Attendance	OK Attendance	Good Attendance	Perfect Attendance



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The Federation of Maytree Nursery and Infants School and Mount Pleasant Junior School

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Dear Parent

Child's name:                      Class:

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance is .....

This constitutes persistent absence and it is vital that we work together to ensure that your child's attendance improves this year.

I understand that some absence from school is unavoidable and all children experience illness. The only exception to this may be if your child is so unwell that they cannot be in school. In this case we will only authorise if you provide medical evidence.

This should include:

- appointment card
- letter from hospital
- prescribed medicine box
- text message for appointment
- letter from doctor

We will now be monitoring child's name attendance for the next 2 weeks if there is no improvement then you will be invited to a meeting to discuss how we can improve Gabriela's attendance.

We remind you that school must be contacted on the day if child's name is too ill to come to school. Unauthorised absences can lead Penalty Notices, referral to Education Welfare.

We look forward to seeing child's name attendance improve

Yours sincerely

Emma Kerrigan-Draper

Executive Headteacher

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Mount Pleasant Junior School  
Mount Pleasant Road, Southampton, SO14 0WZ  
Tel: 023 8022 3634  
Email: [info@mpjs.org.uk](mailto:info@mpjs.org.uk)  
Website: [www.mpjs.org.uk](http://www.mpjs.org.uk)

Maytree Nursery and Infants' School  
Derby Road, Southampton, SO14 0DY  
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Dear Parent

Child's name:    Class

This letter is to make you aware that child's name attendance is .....

This constitutes persistent absence and it is vital that we continue to work together to ensure that your child's attendance improves this year. We understand that some absence from school is unavoidable and all children experience illness.

We remind you that unauthorised absences can lead to penalty notice, referral to Education Welfare or prosecution.

It is important that you contact school on the day of absence.

If you have any concerns regarding child's name attendance please contact the school office to discuss further.

We look forward to seeing child's name attendance improve.

Yours sincerely

Emma Kerrigan-Draper  
Executive Headteacher

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## Leave of Absence Application Form

Parents/Carers/Guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure their child/children's attendance at school. Good attendance is linked to higher achievement. Under Government legislation, the Headteacher is only able to authorise leave of absence of a pupil during term time, if they deem the reason/s given for the leave of absence to be exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will consider your application using the information you have provided below so please include as much information as possible. You will be notified of the Headteacher's decision in writing.

**Applications should be received at least three weeks in advance to allow consideration**

### **Pupil Information:**

FORENAME	SURNAME	DATE OF BIRTH	YEAR GROUP	CLASS/TUTOR

**Details of siblings at other schools that will be travelling:** *(Please note that we may contact these school/s in relation to this application)*

***Name of sibling/s:***

***Date of Birth***

***Current school/schools:***

**I am applying for leave of absence for my child/children**

**from:** \_\_\_\_\_ **to:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of school days absent:**

**Please explain fully the purpose of this absence & why it cannot take place during the 13 out of term time weeks:**

**Name of City/Country being visited during the leave of absence?** *Please note, we may ask for outbound and inbound flight confirmation concerning the leave of absence.*

**Parent/s email addresses and contact telephone numbers whilst on the leave of absence:**

Email:  
Telephone Number:  
Current Address:

**Has your child had leave of absence in the last 12 months?**

**Yes/No**

**If yes, please provide dates/details:**

\*PI

**I submit the information above for consideration by the Headteacher:**

**Signed:**

**Printed:**

**Relationship to Pupil:**

**Date:**



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The Federation of Maytree Nursery and Infants School and Mount Pleasant Junior School

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Dear Parent / Carer,

Thank you for completing the Leave of Absence form, I have enclosed a copy of this which outlines the outcome.

On this occasion, **the leave of absence has been unauthorised / authorised because it is / is not exceptional circumstances**. Leave of Absence should not be planned without prior discussion with staff in the Office, however we must note that leave of absence is not authorised unless in exceptional circumstances. If you feel your circumstances are exceptional, please discuss this further with us to explore the reasons.

Holiday or term time leave should not be taken under any circumstances and routine appointments should also be booked out of school hours where possible. If your child is absent from school for Leave of Absence they will be provided with a diary to complete whilst they are away to continue encourage continuation of education. There is also the expectation that parents must keep in regular contact with the school office by email or telephone to enable us to ensure that your child is safeguarded for extended periods of absence. This is no different to our daily attendance procedure which is again in place to ensure that your child is accounted for.

**We must inform you that in line with the Local Authorities Penalty Notice Code of Conduct that you may receive a fine if your child has unauthorised absence. The cost of this is £60 per child per parent.** It is an offence under S444(1) of the Education Act 1996 if a parent/carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at the school at which they are a registered pupil, of compulsory school age and that absence is not authorised by the school. Significant unauthorised absence could lead to a potential referral to the Education Welfare Service.

If you would like to discuss this further please contact the school office on 023 80223634

Yours sincerely

Emma Kerrigan-Draper

Executive Headteacher

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Dear Parent / Carer

We are aware that you chose to take Leave of Absence for your child.

Leave of Absence should not be planned without prior discussion with the headteacher and a Leave of Absence form being completed, however we must note that leave of absence is not authorised unless in exceptional circumstances. Without the Leave of Absence form being completed, we do not have the opportunity to explore the reasons for absence and to discuss alternative options with you. You were advised by email that this leave of absence would be unauthorised and would be referred to the local authority following the school procedures.

Holiday or term time leave should not be taken under any circumstances and routine appointments should also be booked out of school hours where possible. There is also the expectation that parents **must** keep in regular contact with the school office by email or telephone to enable us to ensure that your child is safeguarded for extended periods of absence. This is no different to our daily attendance procedure which is again in place to ensure that your child is accounted for.

**We must inform you that in line with the Local Authorities Penalty Notice Code of Conduct that you may receive a fine if your child has unauthorised absence. The cost of this is £60 per child per parent. There is also the possibility that your child may be removed from roll and you would have to re-apply for a school place through the Admissions Department at Southampton City Council.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'E. Kerrigan-Draper'.

Emma Kerrigan-Draper  
Headteacher

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