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# Attendance & Punctuality Policy Of Queenborough School And Nursery

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Dated: May 2016  
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Created by: B Conroy  
Adopted by: Governing Body Policy Committee

## Queenborough School and Nursery Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Queenborough School and Nursery believes that full attendance is essential in making sure that each child receives his or her full potential. Quite simply, if a child is not in school, they cannot learn. The school will encourage good attendance by promoting a positive and safe school environment.

The Government defines good attendance as 96% as it has been proven that children with this level of attendance achieve higher results in exams. Good attendance has also been shown to benefit children in other ways, such as children who have good attendance are less likely to become involved in crime and antisocial behaviour.

### Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour.

**It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe. Parents should regularly update the school and inform on when their child is returning.**

### Authorised and unauthorised attendance:

The Head has discretion over awarding authorised or unauthorised status. Even if a parent telephones the school to explain why their child is absent, the ultimate decision to authorise the absence rests with the Head Teacher.

Below are examples of absence deemed NOT to be authorised:

1. Going shopping.
2. Helping a parent at home.
3. Birthdays.

4. Remaining at home whilst older sibling who attends a different school is not at school due to the school having a staff development day.
5. A parent or sibling illness, except in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Head.
6. Getting up late and not coming in for the remainder of the day/session.
7. Inadequate clothing/uniform.
8. Long weekends.
9. Visiting relatives, etc.
10. Holidays.
11. Medical/Dental appointments of more than half a day without a very good reason.

#### Authorised absence:

- Sickness and diarrhoea
- Head lice
- Chicken Pox or other contagious diseases.
- Medical appointments (doctors, hospital or dentist. They must be supported by an appointment card or letter confirming date of the appointment).

#### Registration:

The doors to the children's classrooms open at 8.40 a.m. by which time the children should be lined up outside their class. The register is taken from this time and closes at 9.00 a.m. so if a child arrives after this they are registered as unauthorised.

#### Lateness:

It is the parents' responsibility to ensure arrival at the correct time. Pupils arriving after 8.40 a.m. must enter school by the main entrance and report to Reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed. The register will close at 9 a.m. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

After a period of monitoring should a pattern of lateness emerge, the school will inform parents of their concerns in writing. Frequent lateness after the register has closed will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

The Head Teacher will also be holding 'late gates' which means she will be present on random mornings which will change each week, to monitor who is late.

### Rewards:

Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded with the following:

Each week, there is an assembly to celebrate the 'Awesome Attenders'. The Award is presented to the class with the best attendance of the week. Posters are displayed around the school showing which class is the winner.

Best Time Keepers Award is presented to the class who has the most children in school on time over the week.

In Key Stage 1 Attendance Ted and Punctuality Pup are used to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

At the end of each month 100% certificates are given to all children who have achieved 100% attendance. At the end of the school year children who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year are awarded with a certificate and a small prize and are also entered into the annual Attendance Raffle.

Every child who has 100% at the end of the Academic Year is recognised and rewarded.

## **PROCEDURES FOR WHEN A CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL**

### Absence:

Absence is to be discouraged as it affects the child's educational and social development.

### First Day Calling:

Parents of children who are absent should phone into the school office on EVERY day of their absence by 9.30 to explain why their child is absent from school. If parents have not phoned in, the school will be in contact to investigate why the child is not in school. As it is parents' responsibility to contact the school, if school cannot contact a parent the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Contact with parents ensures that the child is safe,

along with reinforcing school expectations regarding attendance and maintaining open communication with parents.

On the first day of attendance after illness, children should bring in a note explaining why they were absent in order for school to keep up to date and accurate records.

There are occasions when it will not be necessary for parents to phone the school office every day when they are liaising with the Attendance Officer regarding their child's absence.

After a period of monitoring should a pattern of absence emerge, the school will inform parents of their concerns in writing and further concerns are then referred to the Family Liaison Officer. Significant unauthorised absence or persistent lateness may lead ultimately to a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) or court proceedings.

### Fixed Penalty Notices:

Schools have new legal powers regarding unauthorised holidays, attendance problems or lateness. This system is implemented using Local Authority guidance and was adopted by the Governing Body on 1 November 2010. Under this scheme, a Penalty Notice (of initially £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days rising to £120, if paid between 21 and 28 days) may be issued for unauthorised absences.

The Attendance Service may receive a request to issue a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of 10 or more school sessions (5 days).

If a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue, Attendance Service may instigate court proceedings.

### Children Missing Education

No child will be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

## Leave of Absence:

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Pupil Registration regulations, removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that a child was absent:

- With leave (the school has given permission)
- Due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- Religious observance
- Failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

Requests for holidays in term time will not be authorised.

Any parent who takes a child out of school for term-time leave of 10 or more sessions during any 100 possible school sessions, not authorised by the school (under exceptional circumstances), may receive a Penalty Notice. The unauthorised term-time leave does not have to be consecutive for a parent to receive a Penalty Notice.

The Head Teacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Head Teacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Head Teacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

To ensure that attendance is one of the priorities in Queenborough School and Nursery, we hold regular meetings with our Headteacher, Family Liaison Officer and Attendance Officer. Any children with attendance below 96% will have their attendance monitored and parents/carers will be contacted by

letter (to alert them to their child's attendance) or will be required to attend a meeting at school. If attendance does not improve, the parents will be invited into the school to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the matter and try to resolve any issues that may arise from that meeting. If after the meeting the attendance does not improve, the school will then have no choice but to refer the child over to the Attendance and Behaviour Service, who will then arrange to visit the parent/carer at home to discuss the matter further.

The School Liaison Officer will offer any support she can if there is a genuine reason for the child's absence and will work with the family to get the child back into school. If parents fail to keep appointments with the School Liaison Officer, or fail to accept her help and the child's attendance continues to fall, the Local Education Authority may prosecute the parent(s).

**Telephone Numbers:**

School Office:	01795 662574
Attendance and Behaviour Service:	03000418860

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