

Portway Primary School: Pupil Attendance Policy

Last updated: January 2024

Approved by: Local Governing Body, January 2024

Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Overview of the policy management process | 4 |
| 1.1. Document history | 4 |
| 1.2. Review and approval | 4 |
| 2. Portway Primary School - Pupil Attendance Policy | 5 |
| 2.1. Introduction | 5 |
| 2.2. Section 1: The Principles and Legal Framework Around Attendance | 5 |
| 2.3. Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities | 6 |
| 2.4. Section 3: Expectations and processes of managing attendance and following up on unexplained absence | 8 |
| 2.4.1. First day absence contact | 8 |
| 2.4.2. Second day absence contact | 8 |
| 2.4.3. Continuing absence procedures | 9 |
| 2.4.4. Children who cease to attend without prior notification (Child Missing in Education or CME) procedures | 9 |
| 2.4.5. Non-starters | 9 |
| 2.4.6. Vulnerable children | 9 |
| 2.4.7. Monitoring | 10 |
| 2.4.8. Punctuality | 10 |
| 2.4.9. Signing-out | 11 |
| 2.4.10. Long-term medical absence | 11 |
| 2.5. Section 4: Absence, Persistent and Severe Absence and support for pupils and parents | 11 |
| 2.5.1. Leave of absence | 12 |
| 2.5.2. Support for pupils not maintaining expected levels of attendance | 12 |
| 2.6. Section 5: Parental Guidance for holiday requests | 14 |
| 2.6.1. What parents should consider | 16 |
| 2.6.2. The law | 16 |
| 2.7. Section 6: Strategies for promoting school attendance | 18 |
| 2.8. Appendix 1a - Letter 1 | 19 |
| 2.9. Appendix 1b - Letter 2 | 20 |
| 2.10. Appendix 1c - Letter 3 | 21 |
| 2.11. Attendance Policy on a Page: an overview for parents | 22 |
| 2.11.1. Why is attendance important? | 22 |
| 2.11.2. How is attendance recorded? | 22 |
| 2.11.3. What should happen if a child cannot attend school? | 22 |
| 2.11.4. Can a child miss school for a medical or dental appointment? | 22 |
| 2.11.5. Can a child miss school for a family holiday? | 22 |
| 2.11.6. Who is responsible for attendance? | 23 |

1. Overview of the policy management process

1.1. Document history

| Date | Revision | Version number (substantive revisions are allocated a new whole number; minor revisions are designated by the addition of a consecutive decimal point) |
|--------------|---|---|
| January 2024 | Legacy Leading Learning Trust Policy updated for Portway's use and approved by Local Governing Body. Published to the website. | v1.0 |
| | | |

1.2. Review and approval

The Policy applies to Portway Primary School. It is reviewed by the Attendance Leader and is then presented to the head teacher for approval before being ratified by the local governing body.

2. Portway Primary School - Pupil Attendance Policy

2.1. Introduction

At Portway Primary School, we believe that the welfare of every child is of paramount importance. Portway Primary School will establish and maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children at our school will be able to talk freely to any member of staff at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that staff at our schools play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. **All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.** When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the **best interests** of the child. Our rigorous management of attendance at school is a key part of our commitment to the welfare of our children.

2.2. Section 1: The Principles and Legal Framework Around Attendance

We expect the highest level of attendance and punctuality from every pupil. High levels of attendance will provide the opportunity for each pupil to develop their full potential during their time at school. Parents¹, staff, pupils and those in governance must do all in their power to ensure this objective is achieved in line with the legal framework governing attendance and punctuality

The legal framework governing attendance Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that: "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient, full-time education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

Section 444 further states that:

"The parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law."

¹ The definition of a parent can be found in the Education Act 1996, and this applies to the legislation to which this policy relates. In addition to the child's birth parents, references to parents in this policy include any person who has parental responsibility (which includes the local authority where it has a care order in respect of the child) and any person (for example, a foster carer) who has care of the child. To reflect this, this policy uses 'parent' to refer to both parents and carers

An offence is not committed if it can be demonstrated that:

- The pupil was absent with leave (authorised absence)
- The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause
- The absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil/parent belongs
- The absence meets the criteria set out for children of Traveller groups such as Gypsy/Roma families

Failure to comply may lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court where on conviction each parent would be liable to a fine up to £2500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment. The Act also places a legal obligation on:

- The Local Authority (LA) to provide and enforce attendance
- Schools to register attendance and notify the LA of a child's absence from school without authorisation of 10 or more days.
- Those in governance to make sure that school registers are kept; one for attendance and one for admissions.

2.3. Section 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Newham Community Learning Trustees will ensure that all Trust schools comply with statutory arrangements regarding the recording and management of attendance of pupils.

The Portway local governing body will:

- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy, and local school procedures
- Monitor school-level attendance against targets
- Monitor local school attendance data and procedures for equal opportunity issue

The Headteacher will:

- Set a school attendance target
- Monitor progress of attendance of all pupils
- Oversee the attendance arrangements
- Work with school staff to ensure the efficient running of the attendance system
- Make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence
- Make periodic checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence
- Deal with issues of inadequate registering
- Arrange appropriate training for staff
- Determine whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made

- Notify parents as appropriate that if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence
- Initiate strategies to improve attendance and train staff accordingly
- Liaise with the LA attendance team over persistent absentees after school action has taken place. Referrals to the service need to be made by electronic means.

Class Teachers will:

- Ensure that pupils are registered accurately
- Follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable notes
- Inform appropriate colleagues of any signs of suspected truancy
- Inform appropriate colleagues of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences and lateness
- Make pupils aware of their attendance at regular intervals

The Attendance Officer will:

- Enter attendance/absence data into Arbor
- Prepare reports as required for the Headteacher and others
- Contact parents on the first day of absence
- Support targeted pupils
- When attendance falls below 96%, consider whether to send a Stage 1 – Attendance Letter (see appendix 1a) taking advice from colleagues as necessary
- When attendance falls below 90%, consider whether to send a Stage 2 – Attendance Letter 2 (see appendix 1b) taking advice from colleagues as necessary
- When attendance continues to fall after Stages 1 and 2, consider whether to send a Stage 3 – Attendance Letter 3 (see appendix 1c) taking advice from colleagues as necessary
- Notify class teachers of any patterns of absence
- Liaise with the Local Authority over persistent absentees after school action has taken place. Referrals to the service need to be made by electronic means.

The SENCO will:

- Support pupils on the SEND register who have regular patterns of non-attendance
- Be involved in any reintegration programme, where deemed necessary

Pupils are required to:

- Attend all sessions in the school year unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session)

Parents are required to:

- Be responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually in accordance with their legal obligations

- Make any request for leave of absence on the school's official leave of absence form
- Telephone school on the first day of absence and any subsequent days by 09.00am
- Plan holidays outside of term time
- Attend any meetings organised by the school to create an action plan to improve attendance

2.4. Section 3: Expectations and processes of managing attendance and following up on unexplained absence

Expected Attendance The Law requires schools to be open to pupils for 190 days each year. Each day a legal register is taken for the 'AM' and 'PM' session. All registers are recorded electronically on a database called Arbor. This information constitutes the legal attendance register for the school as such is shared with the LA and government for their reporting and monitoring purposes.

The times of the daily registration are:

- Morning session, 'AM Registration': from 08:30 to 8:40am
- Afternoon session, 'PM Registration': 20 minutes from start of afternoon session (varies with year group)

Overall attendance is calculated on the legal requirement for pupils to attend 190 school days per year. As each day consists of two sessions ('AM' and 'PM') there are a total of 380 possible sessions in a school year. Therefore, if a pupil is ill for three days in a year, their attendance would be 98.4% because 3 days is 6 missed registration sessions and $(374/380) \times 100 = 98.4\%$ attendance.

The Department for Education defines any pupil with below 90% attendance as Persistently Absent, and any pupil with attendance below 50% as Severely Absent.

2.4.1. First day absence contact

Parents/carers are expected to notify the school as early as possible if their child is unable to attend for any unavoidable reason, such as illness. If the school does not receive notification, a member of staff will telephone on the first day of absence, to try to ascertain the reason. First day contact will be carried out as early as possible in the school day, in order to notify parents whose children may have set off for school, but not arrived, as quickly as possible.

2.4.2. Second day absence contact

If the child is still absent on the second day without contact from the family, a telephone call will be made to the home.

2.4.3. Continuing absence procedures

In the event of an absence of three or more days without contact from the family, a home visit will be made (a home visit will be made on the first day of absence for a Looked After Child, a child subject to a Child Protection Plan or a Child in Need). Any child who has a pattern of erratic attendance or persistent lateness after registers close will be referred to Newham's Attendance Management Service if they attend Portway Primary School. At school, we have an Attendance Management Officer on site at school who performs this role. In order that further investigations can be made. Such cases will be allocated to an Attendance Management Officer who will visit the home, set targets for improvement, signpost sources of support if needed, and ultimately recommend court action or a Penalty Notice if there is no improvement.

2.4.4. Children who cease to attend without prior notification (Child Missing in Education or CME) procedures

Procedures for trying to trace children who cease to attend without prior notification are covered in detail in Newham's Children Missing in Education Policy which can be found on the London Borough of Newham council's website. However, if, after ten days' continuous absence school has been unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a pupil, they will refer the child's details to the Local Authority for it to perform further checks that are not available to school. If after 20 days continuous unauthorised absence, their whereabouts cannot be traced, they will be removed from the school admissions register.

2.4.5. Non-starters

Pupils who are allocated places but fail to start are also treated as children missing in education. If we have been unable to make contact with the family during a ten-day period after their expected arrival, they will refer the pupils to the local authority children missing education team for further checks.

2.4.6. Vulnerable children

Children who are Looked After (LAC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP), Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with highest priority and will be known to the Attendance Officer. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home, a home visit or by a call to the allocated Social worker/Families First worker. The AMS will be informed and action will be coordinated and acted accordingly. Children with Special

Educational Needs (SEN) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in school can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible.

2.4.7. Monitoring

Parents may request an up-to-date attendance report at any time during the school year. Please contact the Attendance Officer to request this. The school will have regular checks to monitor attendance, including:

- Daily checks carried out by the attendance officer. Parents of pupils coded N (no reason yet provided) or O (unauthorised absence) for that day may expect a phone call from the attendance officer responsible for first day calling to ask for an explanation for their child's absence.
- Attendance concern letters may be sent to parents to inform them when their attendance falls below 96%, subject to consideration of individual circumstances
- Persistent absence letters are sent for information purposes, once a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, subject to consideration of individual circumstances
- Pupils falling below 90% attendance, are placed into an attendance priority category. These pupils, and their parents may be asked to meet with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher where barriers to attendance will be discussed, targets set, and support agreed as appropriate to improve attendance.
- Each month the attendance officer will analyse data patterns of attendance across the school by pupil groups to highlight areas for improvement.
- In line with DfE school census guidance at the end of each academic year, registers are reset, and attendance is started again for the next academic year. However, attendance concerns will be considered on a rolling 12-month basis.

2.4.8. Punctuality

It is important to make the distinction between a late that occurs during the official registration period and a late that occurs after the official registration period. The registration period covers the time between 08:30 and 08:40 during the morning session.

The Attendance Officer will ensure the appropriate late code is recorded on Arbor:

- 'L' where a pupil arrives late but during the morning registration period (08:40 and 09:05). This does not affect the pupil's overall attendance figure.
- 'U' where a pupil arrives later after the morning registration period has closed (i.e. after 09:05 am) . This will affect the pupil's overall attendance figure.

Pupils who become persistently absent will have parents contacted by the Attendance Officer. After the day of contacting, any lateness will be marked U on Arbor. Pupils that arrive

late for morning registration (08:40-09:05) should go to the main Reception and be recorded as in school. They will be asked to sign in via the Sign In App.

Office staff should record this as late, including the time, on Arbor. Pupils who arrive late after the morning registration period (i.e. after 09:05) should also sign-in at Reception and will be marked as 'U'.

2.4.9. Signing-out

There must always be an accurate record of all pupils on-site. Pupils must sign-out if they are leaving the school site. Staff will follow normal safeguarding procedures to ensure the safety of pupils asking to leave the site. Pupils should be signed out at Reception by a parent or guardian via the Sign in App system, producing proof of why they are leaving (an appointment card, note or such) if it is not already marked on Arbor.

2.4.10. Long-term medical absence

When a pupil is absent because of long-term illness, or an under-lying health condition an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) may be written alongside the parent and other appropriate stakeholders. This should provide a structure for the pupil to be re-integrated back into the classroom. An IHCP should only be completed once diagnosis is confirmed and the prognosis given by the medical team supporting the pupil.

2.5. Section 4: Absence, Persistent and Severe Absence and support for pupils and parents

We understand that pupils may be genuinely absent for obvious reasons, including: poor health or illness; bereavement; and other exceptional circumstances. Families are required to inform the school as soon as possible of their child's absence. They must also give a reason for the absence. Pupils missing registration will be initially coded 'N' (No reason given), until an explanation has been given from the parent. It can then be changed to the appropriate code, for example 'I' (Illness). 'N' marks should be changed to 'O' (absent without authorisation) after 5 days if no reason has been identified for the absence. Where a pupil becomes persistently absent (less than 90% attendance) due to illness, then the school may invite parents to provide medical evidence for any further absence. Medical evidence may include items such as a doctor's note or certificates or hospital appointment letters.

Parents are asked to provide a copy of the letter or show staff a reminder text message advising the school of the appointment.

2.5.1. Leave of absence

The Headteacher can only grant leave of absence in very exceptional cases. Headteachers should make decisions with due regard for the individual circumstances and attendance profile of the pupil concerned. Should families wish to apply for leave of absence, a request form can be collected from the Attendance Officer at least two weeks prior to the date leave is required. The form should be returned to the Attendance Officer, who will consult with the Headteacher. Parents will be advised of the outcome. Should parents wish to appeal this decision, this should be addressed in writing to the Headteacher.

2.5.2. Support for pupils not maintaining expected levels of attendance

Pupils will face a graduated level of support to meet their need for improving attendance. The most effective support is when clear lines of communication are established between all parties involved.

The strategies we can employ will include (but are not limited to the following)

| Tiers | Action | Supporting Documents |
|--|--|---|
| Attendance above 97%: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular discussions between pupil and class teachers Rewards and incentives (see section 4) | |
| Attendance below 96% (Attendance Concern) Stage 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having given due consideration to the individual circumstances, the Attendance Officer, in agreement with the Headteacher, will send a Stage 1 – Attendance Letter 1 home to inform parents about their child’s attendance, and that there is a risk of underachievement for their child if their attendance does not improve. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 1 – Attendance Letter 1 (see appendix 1a) |
| Attendance below 90% (Persistent Absence) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having given due consideration to the individual | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 2 - |

| Tiers | Action | Supporting Documents |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Stage 2 Meeting with Attendance Lead</p> | <p>circumstances the Attendance Officer will send a Stage 2 – Attendance Letter 2 (see appendix 1b) home to inform parents about their child’s attendance, and that there is a serious risk of underachievement for their child if their attendance does not improve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Attendance Officer will invite parents/carers to attend a meeting to identify the reasons behind the absences and ways in which the school can support the family to improve the attendance ● Medical Evidence letters may be sent or already be on school file. ● Parents may be invited to attend a Team Around Me (TAM), or an Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT) meeting, where barriers to attendance can be discussed and solutions offered. ● Where SEMH or other medical needs are identified, referral to the appropriate agency may be supported. For example, counselling, CAMHS or other pupil services. ● Reduced timetables may only be offered to pupils with a medical or SEMH need. They should only be used for the shortest time possible to allow a successful reintegration and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attendance letter 2 (see appendix 1b) |

| Tiers | Action | Supporting Documents |
|---|--|--|
| | <p>must not be used as response to poor behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Authority (LA) will be made aware and may contact families directly. They may also carry out home visits. • Staff may carry out a home visit to help support pupils and families. • At the end of the meeting, targets and actions will be agreed for the family to work on or will be shared. • A letter will be sent in cases where parents/carers do not attend. | |
| <p>A pupil that has more than 10% UA absence and parent fails to attend the meeting with no correspondence/ Or parent attended the meeting and further unauthorised absence.</p> <p>Stage 3 Pre referral meeting with DH</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets set in the previous meeting to be reviewed. • Parents/carers are expected to attend a meeting to discuss reasons behind no improvement in attendance. • A letter will be sent in cases where parents/carers do not attend. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 3 - • Attendance letter 3 (see appendix 1c) |
| <p>Attendance does not improve a request for statutory intervention may be applied</p> | | |

2.6. Section 5: Parental Guidance for holiday requests

Portway Primary School believes that pupils benefit from full-time attendance at school so that they can access a broad, balanced and knowledge rich curriculum that promotes academic progress and attainment. Excellent attendance also ensures that pupils can benefit from the extra-curricular activities on offer at school that promote good social and emotional development. As such, Portway Newham Community Learning does not encourage its Headteachers to authorise requests for term-time holidays. Whilst NCL recognises that Headteachers may legally authorise such a request in exceptional circumstances it is highly unlikely that this will be the case. This stance is in line with DfE guidance (paragraph 30, page 13);

“As head teachers should only grant leave of absences in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday”

- From September 2013, the Government has legislated that no holidays will be authorised in term time
- Holidays not agreed by the school, but taken, are unauthorised absences and shown in the register by code 'G'
- If parents take their children on holiday during term time the Headteacher will request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). This will be actioned if the holiday period is longer than 6 sessions.
- The school will act according to DfE and LA advice should there be any changes in legislation

Penalty Notices can be issued for a range of attendance-related offences, including unauthorised term-time holidays, poor attendance and poor punctuality, a child coming to the attention of the police in school time, or located twice or more in truancy sweeps in 6 months. Further details are available on www.newham.gov.uk/schools/Attendance.

In agreement with appropriate local partners, the following circumstances may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice:

- Where parents persistently fail to ensure their children attend school and attendance is 90 per cent or below of absence in a 12 week period (i.e. 12 or more sessions), with no acceptable reason, and no other legal sanctions are underway;
- Term time leave of 3 days or more is taken without obtaining the agreement of the school and the parents have been warned that a Penalty Notice may result;
- Unwarranted delayed return from term time leave without school agreement resulting in a child missing the beginning of term or the school year, or the date set by the head teacher for return from an authorised leave of absence;

- Persistent late arrival after the registers have been closed (U code only) (10 sessions or more); and
- Parents' or carers' failure to make arrangements to ensure that children who have been excluded from school due to misbehaviour are not in a public place at prescribed times during the first five school days of any exclusion, without reasonable justification.

2.6.1. What parents should consider

Portway Primary recognises that it is often expensive to take a holiday during school breaks and that is why some parents may ask for term time leave for their children; this is not considered to be 'exceptional circumstances.' It is important that parents carefully consider the implications of taking their child out of school during term time. Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the work they have missed.

This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations. Children who struggle with English or mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while children of all ages may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates. Any absence from school may lead to a child experiencing problems, such as difficulties securing basic skills of reading, writing and maths which are fundamental to progress throughout school. However, absence at certain times of year can be particularly problematic, e.g.

- Closeness to exams or tests
- During the first year at a new school
- At the beginning of a new school term

If the school refuses a request for term time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and may lead to a £60/£120 fine per parent, for each child.

2.6.2. The law

The law does not say that parents have an automatic right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. However, in exceptional circumstances the Headteacher may authorise, in advance, requests for periods of leave. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides.

If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period, this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance. If the child is away from school for a total of 4 weeks or more, the school may have to take the child off of our school admissions register unless there is a good reason for

the continued absence, such as illness. In these circumstances it is up to the parent to inform the school, as once removed from our school admissions register there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force on 1 September 2013. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Holiday prices, and the fact that the parents have booked a holiday before checking with the school, are not exceptional circumstances.

Other absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but these should be arranged out of school hours if possible)
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children go on the road with their parents, where the school is informed beforehand

Other absence from school **will not be authorised**. Examples include:

- For any type of shopping
- Looking after siblings or parents
- Minding the house
- Birthdays
- Resting after a late night
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
- Because holidays are cheaper in term time
- More than one day for a family wedding

Fixed Penalty Notices The school will issue and administer penalty notices according to Local Authority procedures. The penalty is £60, for each parent per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay may result in prosecution where on conviction parents would be liable to a fine of up to £2500.

- Penalty notices may be issued where it is determined that to do so would be an effective and appropriate addition to ongoing casework with a pupil and their parents. The Headteacher will be informed if this action is taken.

- Where feasible, parents should be warned of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued and invited to make representations to the school. Notification is sent to parents when holiday request forms are submitted to the school.

2.7. Section 6: Strategies for promoting school attendance

Portway Primary School recognises that positively promoting excellent attendance (above 98%) will have the biggest impact on a pupil's attainment and wellbeing. Intrinsic motivators, such as a developing a pupil's own desire and ambition to attend school regularly and do well, are always preferable to extrinsic motivators such as school rewards systems. However, Portway recognises that in some circumstances rewards and incentives can play a role in promoting good school attendance by recognising pupil achievement, especially where attendance improves through a pupil's actions to overcome barriers to attendance. It is important to ensure that any such rewards and incentives are applied fairly and that they do not discriminate against either groups or individual pupils.

Portway will pay careful consideration to the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that individuals with protected characteristics are not discriminated against. As such, Portway does not agree with rewarding pupils for 100% attendance as this may discriminate against pupils, e.g. those with under-lying health conditions for whom 100% attendance is unachievable.

2.8. Appendix 1a - Letter 1



Portway Primary School,
Stratford Road, London, E13 0JW
T 020 8472 7142
www.portway.leadinglearningtrust.org

XXXXXXXX

Dear Parent/Carer of :-
Class -

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first Letter to register our concern with parents. We are therefore writing to you due to 's current level of attendance:

| Attendance | % |
|------------|---|
|------------|---|

I understand that you may have already provided reasons and/or medical evidence for some or all of your child's absences, which is much appreciated. However, as a school we need to strive for excellence in pupil's attendance and support our families to achieve this.

We would like to ask that you make every effort in improving your child's attendance. If your child's attendance does not improve by the next review, you will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss your child's attendance in more detail.

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression over a whole school year.

| |
|---|
| <p>Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year – Less than 30 Hours of Learning Lost Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best levels/grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.</p> |
| <p>95%: 10 days absence a year – 50 Hours of Learning Lost These pupils are less likely to achieve their target levels/grades and will start to find it difficult to maintain a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2-week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.</p> |
| <p>90%: 19 days absence a year – 95 Hours of Learning Lost The Government classes pupils in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work and achieve their target levels/grades. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by Newham Council, including the issuing of Penalty Notices and Fines.</p> |

If you have any queries, would like to talk to someone about attendance or require additional support then please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Harris on 020 8472 7142.

Yours sincerely



Scott Chudley
Head teacher



Portway Primary School is part of Newham Community Learning - a family of schools that exists in order to provide an excellent education for all young people in our community.

2.9. Appendix 1b - Letter 2



XXXXXXXXXX

Dear Parent of

Since we last wrote to you, **<name of pupil>**'s attendance has failed to improve significantly, and is now **<attendance percentage>**%. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year.

At Portway Primary School we believe that every child should achieve their very best in all aspects of their education. There is clear evidence that a child's school attendance has a direct effect on their learning.

I understand that you may have already provided reasons and/or medical evidence for some or all of your child's absences, which is much appreciated. However, as a school we need to strive for excellence in pupil's attendance and support our families to achieve this therefore, any further absences will not be authorised without supporting medical evidence.

We wish to help yourselves and **<name of pupil>** to improve their attendance. We would therefore like to request a meeting on **<date/time>** to discuss your child's poor attendance. Please note that if you do not attend, this meeting will take place even in your absence and targets will be set.

We would appreciate your support to make sure **<name of child>**'s attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and may refer your child's absence to Newham Council for consideration of a fixed penalty notice fine or legal action if unauthorised absence continues to occur.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Scott Chudley
Headteacher



2.10. Appendix 1c - Letter 3



Portway Primary School,
Stratford Road, London, E13 0JW
T 020 8472 7142

www.portway.leadinglearningtrust.org

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear Parent of

Since our last meeting where we set targets to improve your child's attendance and provided support to achieve this, **<name of pupil>**'s attendance has failed to improve significantly, and is now **<attendance percentage>**%. We are very concerned about the effects this has had on your child's learning and want to see an improvement.

At Portway Primary School we believe that every child should achieve their very best in all aspects of their education. There is clear evidence that a child's school attendance has a direct effect on their learning.

I understand that you may have already provided reasons and/or medical evidence for some or all of your child's absences, which is much appreciated. However, as a school we need to strive for excellence in pupil's attendance and support our families to achieve this therefore, any further absences will not be authorised without supporting medical evidence.

We wish to help yourselves and **<name of pupil>** to improve their attendance. We would therefore like to request a further meeting on **<date/time>** to discuss reasons behind your child's poor attendance. Please note that if you do not attend, this meeting will take place even in your absence and further action may be taken.

We would appreciate your support to make sure **<name of child>**'s attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and will refer your child's absence to Newham Council for consideration of a fixed penalty notice fine or legal action if unauthorised absence continues to occur.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Scott Chudley
Headteacher



2.11. Attendance Policy on a Page: an overview for parents

2.11.1. Why is attendance important?

Excellent attendance at school is linked to better academic progress and attainment by ensuring pupils access a broad, balanced and knowledge-rich curriculum. It also ensures that pupils can benefit from the extra-curricular activities on offer at school that promote good social and emotional development. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child has an appropriate education. For most children in the UK this means full-time attendance at school.

2.11.2. How is attendance recorded?

Schools have a legal duty to take an attendance register twice a day. This is recorded on an electronic system called Arbor. Attendance is recorded each school day for an 'AM' and 'PM' mark. Where a pupil is absent from school the reason for this absence must be established as soon as possible and recorded on the Arbor attendance record. When should pupils attend school? Pupils should attend on all school days as set out in the term dates available on the school website. Pupils should arrive between 08.40am. The morning registration period is open for 20 minutes from this time until 9.00am. Pupils who are not in class at 8.40am will be marked as late. Pupils who arrive after 9.10am will be marked as late after registration has closed.

2.11.3. What should happen if a child cannot attend school?

Families should inform school as soon as possible that their child is unable to attend by phoning 020 8472 7142. If a child is absent for more than one day parents should continue to update the school of the reason why daily.

2.11.4. Can a child miss school for a medical or dental appointment?

Wherever possible medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours. Where absence to attend an appointment is unavoidable the pupil should miss as little of the school day as possible. School should be informed of the appointment in advance and the pupil should be 'signed-out' at the time of the appointment via the Sign App system.

2.11.5. Can a child miss school for a family holiday?

The law only allows Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. These reasons are listed in the main attendance policy. Portway Primary School does not support the authorisation of term-time holidays. If a parent is determined to take their child out of

school for a family holiday, then they should use the correct form to inform the Headteacher in advance. Should a request for holiday be refused it is likely that a fixed penalty notice will be issued to both parents.

2.11.6. Who is responsible for attendance?

Kaylee Harris is the schools Attendance Officer, and she can be contacted via the main school reception.