PHOENIX INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

"Attendance matters…"

Flying High at Phoenix!

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a **minimum of 97% (this means each child has less than 8 days absence in one school year)**
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and schoolwork easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to their next school

Responsibility of Parents/Carers:

Phoenix Infant School expects that parents/carers will -

- ensure their children attend the school regularly
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school
- notify school on the first day of absence, by telephoning the school before 9am, or by speaking to the school/office staff when dropping off siblings

As a parent you can help us by:

- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks where possible
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence de to illness

Parents will also be expected to:

- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day

Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Phoenix Infant School. Parents are reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment, and weekly attendance figures are shared with pupils and parents via the website.

We also report every child's attendance figures at the end of each year or as part of an attendance meeting. There is now an attendance display in the school hall which is updated weekly. We make it a priority to ensure that we praise all pupils whose attendance is good or better. We identify those pupils who have good attendance (97% and above) on a termly basis and give out certificates.

First day calling:

Our school has in place a system of first- day calling. This means that parents have not contacted school when their child is absent, they are telephoned on the first day to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify, at an early stage, pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Where it is not possible to contact parents on the first day of absence, the school will phone every day of the absence and may refer a case of concern to the Early Help Team.

Home Visits

A member of identified school staff may make home visits if they are concerned about the attendance of a child and have not had any explanation for absence. If undertaking a home visit, staff will ensure they go in with another member of staff for safeguarding issues.

Meetings with Parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3-to-4-week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit – usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them including medical authorisation. Any child with an attendance figure of 90% or below will not have any absences authorised there on in.

We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school website and the Home-School agreement
- Publish our attendance rate on the school website
- Acknowledge and reward good attendance
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance and offer support where necessary.
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to Targeted Support.

Unauthorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are *rare* occasions when there might be a particular problem that cause your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are *not* permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Unapproved Holidays
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.

- Unauthorised absences have to be monitored. They can result in a referral to the Local Authority who will contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has a large number of unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and can be embarrassing for your child.
- Arrival after the close of registration may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DoE guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.

Term Time Leave of Absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence:

• Head teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

• Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be made in writing to the Head Teacher and must establish that there are exceptional circumstances, and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. We reserve the right to request additional information if necessary.

• Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will

result in the absence being unauthorised and could lead to further action from the school.

Leavers

If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 2 to go to Junior School, parents are asked to -

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or atleast the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving.
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us, and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you,then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education.** This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children'sSocial Care, the Police, and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child but by giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

"Everyday counts…"

Approved by:	Governors	**Date:** PPS Autumn 2021
Last reviewed on:	Summer 2021 - minor changes	
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