

Menston Primary School



Attendance Policy

Menston Primary School
Menston
West Yorkshire
LS29 6LF

Tel: 01943 873180

E-mail: office@menstonprimary.co.uk

Web site: www.menstonprimary.co.uk

Headteacher
Marie Wilson

Menston Primary School

Attendance Policy

Menston Primary School Attendance Policy Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Training of staff
5. Pupil expectations
6. Absence procedures
7. Contact information
8. Attendance officer
9. Lateness
10. Term-time leave
11. Missing children
12. Religious observances
13. Appointments
14. Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities
15. Young carers
16. Monitoring and review

Appendix

- a) Leave of Absence Form

Statement of Intent- working with parents

The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually. The school sets high targets for attendance and aims for all children to achieve 97% attendance or better in each school year. This means that, ideally, no child will have more than 5 days absence (one week) in any school year. School staff will work to encourage high attendance by providing a stimulating, welcoming, inclusive environment in which children thrive and in which they love to come to school. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis. They also have a duty to support the work of the school and not to undermine the efforts of school staff to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for all children.

Section 7 of the Education Act 2006 clearly tasks all parents of school age children with the responsibility to ensure that their children attend regularly. Parents are responsible for the attendance of their children.

Menston Primary School is committed to working alongside parents to help them do this by:

- Promoting good attendance and behaviour
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils
- Rewarding regular attendance

1. Legal framework

1.1 This policy has due regard to legislation, including but not limited to, the following:

- Parent/guardian, schools and the Local Authority have legal responsibilities in ensuring that children attend school.
- Parent/guardians of children of compulsory school age must ensure that their children receive an efficient and full-time education, either at school or otherwise (Education Act 1944 S.36).

Schools must publish attendance data showing the number of unauthorised absences in each term of the preceding school year, expressed as a percentage of the total number of possible attendance that term (The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991).

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963

1.2 This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- [DfE \(2020\) 'School attendance'](#)
- [DfE recording attendance in relation to coronavirus \(COVID-19\) during the 2021 to 2022 academic year](#)
- [DfE \(2015\) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'](#)

1.3 This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedure
- Positive Behaviour Policy

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The governing board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Menston Primary School.
- 2.2 The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.3 The governing board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedure.
- 2.4 The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- 2.5 Staff, including the Parental Involvement Worker, teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 2.6 Class teachers are required to complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Pupil attendance is monitored regularly to highlight and take action where the attendance of individual children is causing concern.
- 2.7 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 2.8 Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- 2.9 Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

- **"Absence"** as:
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Not attending school for any reason.
- An **"authorised absence"** as:
 - An absence for sickness or absence relating to the government's COVID-19 regulations for which the school has granted leave.
 - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
 - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
 - An absence due to a family emergency.
- An **"unauthorised absence"** as:
 - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
 - Absences which have never been properly explained.
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthday.
 - Day trips and holidays in term-time.
 - Leaving school for no valid reason during the day.
- **"Persistent absenteeism"** as:
 - Missing **10 %** or more of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1 The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, the Parental Involvement Worker and teachers receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.

- 4.2 Staff receive this policy as part of their induction.
- 4.3 Staff receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Pupil expectations

- 5.1 Pupils are expected to attend school every day possible and are expected to work hard to achieve attendance above 97%. This would mean having no more than five days absence in any school year.

6. Absence procedures

- 6.1 Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence before 8.00am. An absence phone line is available 24/7 for parents to leave messages.
- 6.2 When a child is absent, the class teacher records the absence in the register. As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the Parental Involvement Worker will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and all other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence in order to check on the safety of the child.
- 6.3 If a child is absent due to vomiting and/or diarrhoea they should not return to school for the next 48 hours after the last bout of sickness/diarrhoea. This is to reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school.
- 6.4 Parents must obtain a leave of absence request form prior to a known absence from school.
- 6.5 A phone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- 6.6 In the case of persistent absence, if a pupil's attendance drops below 90%, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.

7. Contact information

- 7.1 It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent.
This is a safeguarding matter so that all parties know that your child is safe.
- 7.2 Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 7.3 Parents are responsible for updating the school if their details change.

8. Attendance officer

- 8.1 If a child is persistently absent and the situation cannot be resolved therefore, attendance does not improve, the Headteacher has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents in line with the Local Authority Procedures. The school may involve Local Authority attendance officers who may carry out home visits.
- 8.2 Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply. In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.

9. Lateness

- 9.1 Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2 The school day officially starts at 8.55am (09:00 for Foundation). Pupils should be in their classroom by this time. The school doors are open from 8.45am allowing children to settle themselves in the classroom.

- 9.3 The register closes at 08:55am (09:00 for Foundation). If a pupil is not in class at this time an absence/late mark is given for the morning sessions (code L – before registers close).
- 9.4 Pupils arriving after 9.25am will be marked as late (code U – after registers close). This national code counts as an unauthorised absence which means they will lose their attendance mark for that morning which in turn impacts upon the overall attendance percentage.
- Frequent lateness is disruptive to learning, both for the child concerned and the class. Frequent or regular lateness can provide grounds for prosecution or the issue of a Penalty Notice.
- 9.5 All pupils who arrive late must report to the school office where they are registered, their meal requirements noted and the reason for lateness is recorded.

10. Term-time leave/Penalty notices (fines)

- 10.1 At Menston Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future life and career. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed and not to take additional holidays.
- 10.2 The Headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- 10.3 The Headteacher will not grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances that include any days of family holiday.
- 10.4 Menston Primary School adopts the Local Authority's (Bradford Council) Code of Conduct which allows for Penalty Notices to be issued to parents who take their children out of school for holidays and leave of absence without the permission of the school. Information can be found [here](#).

11. Missing children

- 11.1 Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the Headteacher.
- 11.2 The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:
- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the Headteacher immediately.
 - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
 - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Headteacher.
 - The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Cloakrooms
 - The library
 - The halls and dining room
 - The meeting room
 - Care Club
 - The school grounds
 - Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
 - If the pupil has not been found after **10** minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
 - If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
 - The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 11.3 If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any special educational needs and disabilities, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

- 11.4 When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 11.5 The Headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 11.6 Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 11.7 The Headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 11.8 Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed.
- 11.9 A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.
- 11.10 If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer their child to another school, the Headteacher must be informed in writing. Children cannot be removed from the school roll until we have been notified by another school that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending and who cannot be traced cannot be removed from the school roll. They are reported to the Local Authority Attendance Service. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed.

12. Religious observances

- 12.1 The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.
- 12.2 Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

13. Appointments

- 13.1 As far as possible, parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 13.2 Where this is not possible, the school office should be informed.
- 13.3 If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.
- 13.4 Pupils should attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

14. Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities

- 14.1 Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).
- 14.2 Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance is required to request a licence from the pupil's home Local Authority (LA).
- 14.3 The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away.
- 14.4 The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:
 - The pupil's education, health and wellbeing will not suffer; and
 - The conditions of the licence will be observed.
- 14.5 The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance/activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil's wellbeing, and that the pupil's education will not suffer.
- 14.6 The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in

- their education. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.
- 14.7 The organiser of the performance/activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out.
- 14.8 The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the license.
- 14.9 The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:
- For not less than six hours a week; and
 - During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
 - On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
 - For not more than five hours on any such day.
- 14.10 Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity, and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six month period.
- 14.11 Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school.
- 14.12 Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day.
- 14.13 The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 95 per cent.
- 14.14 Where a license has not been obtained, the Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.
- 14.15 The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application.
- 14.16 The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this can include maximum hours and breaks.
- 14.17 The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only.
- 14.18 Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the license applies is less than 60 days.
- 14.19 A license is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad.
- 14.20 The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:
- Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place;
 - Where performances or activities are taking place; or
 - Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met.
- 14.21 The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licenses at any time.
- 14.22 If the LA refuses to grant a license, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual/organisation applying for the license.
- 14.23 The organiser of the performance/activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given.

15. Young carers

- 15.1 The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- 15.2 The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- 15.3 The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

16. Monitoring and review

- 16.1 The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 16.2 Menston Primary School's attendance target is 98 per cent.
- 16.3 This policy is reviewed every three years.
- 16.4 Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

17. Attend and Achieve!

- ✓ If a school can **improve** attendance by **1%**, they will see a **5-6%** improvement in **attainment** (DfE).
- ✓ Please help us and your child by ensuring their attendance remains **above 97%**, allowing them to **achieve** their potential.

MENSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. Bradford Council expects all parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Absences due to holidays, taken during term time can seriously impact on a pupil's academic attainment. Bradford Council's policy is to only grant leave of absence in the most exceptional circumstances.

In accordance with Pupil Registration Regulations (amendment September 2013) the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Our policy is not to authorise leave taken in term time unless circumstances are truly exceptional. Please note the lower cost of holidays at certain times does not constitute exceptional circumstances. Such authorisation will be at the discretion of the Headteacher. On this form you must make it clear why your circumstances are truly exceptional. You should be aware that missing school will mean missing important parts of the curriculum which may not be repeated. Parents of children in Years 2 and 6 should note that Statutory Tests take place in May as do the equally important non-statutory assessments for other year groups. We do not provide homework for pupils who go on leave during term time.

PARENT/CARER SECTION (please print clearly)

Name of Child		Class	
Name of Parent/Carer			
Reason for Absence			
Length of Absence (Number of School Days)		Destination	
First Date of Absence		Last Date of Absence	
Parent/Carer Signature		Date	

Reason why we cannot take the leave within the 13 weeks provided by school. Please continue overleaf or attach a separate letter.

SCHOOL SECTION – LEAVE OF ABSENCE AUTHORISATION

To the Parent/Carer of _____ Class _____

From the following dates: _____ to _____

Authorised

Unauthorised

Days authorised

Days unauthorised (inclusive of the above)

Signed _____ Headteacher, Mr Iain Jones