The Prebendal School

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE AND MISSING PUPIL POLICY

This policy covers the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage

All pupils are expected to attend every session of the school term unless they are ill or the School has authorised their absence. Throughout this policy the word ‘parent/parents’ should be taken to mean either parent(s) or those in loco parentis.

References
This policy has been drawn up with regard to the statutory guidance Children Missing Education (DfE 2016).

Other Policies
This policy should be read in conjunction with the School’s:
- First Aid Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy

Types Of Absence Illness At Home
If a pupil is too ill to come to school, parents, should inform the School before the start of the school day at 8.25am. If a pupil is absent frequently owing to illness, the School may ask for medical guidance to make sure that the right support is given. Should a pupil need to take medication following an illness, this should be arranged via the front office.

Illness At School
If a pupil becomes unwell at School, they may only leave once permission has been given by a member of staff; pupils should not contact their parents directly to request collection. Permission must be given by a member of staff. The member of staff giving permission should make the appropriate office staff aware that they have given permission. Parents (or emergency contacts, if necessary) will then be contacted by the School to arrange collection.

Medical/ Dental Appointments
The School will automatically authorise absence for routine or emergency medical or dental appointments. As much notice as possible should be given. In the case of emergency appointments, parents should ask the Office to pass on a message to their children.

Other Circumstances
Permission for absence on any other grounds should be sought, in writing, from the Head.

Unauthorised Absence

16.01.2019/15.01.2020/H/P
If a pupil is absent without good reason or permission, this will be recorded as unauthorised. If necessary, the procedures outlined in the Missing Pupil Policy will be followed and action taken accordingly.

**Long Term Absence**
Prebendal is committed to supporting any pupil who is absent from School on a long term basis, defined as a period of more than five working days.

The School will do all that is possible to ensure that any pupil is reintegrated smoothly. There will be appropriate discussion between the School, the pupil and their family to assist this process, but at all times the welfare of other pupils will also be considered.

**Methods Of Communication**
The School asks that notice of future absence be given as early as is practicably possible. This should be addressed to the Head and communicated via the school office.

**Pupils Leaving During The Day**
All pupils should wait by the main school office to be collected and signed out by a parent, guardian or appropriate adult (of which the school should be made aware). No pupil is allowed to leave school unaccompanied during the day.

**Children Missing Education**
Prebendal recognises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect; tutors and/or office staff should report to the DSL any cases of unauthorised, unexplained or prolonged absence (five continuous days). In these instances, if a pupil’s absence from school still gives cause for concern (because it is unauthorised, unexplained, prolonged or a combination of the three), after the steps of the Missing Pupil procedure (below) have been followed and/or contact made with parents, the DSL will make contact with the appropriate local agencies. Should a pupil fail to attend school regularly or be absent without the School’s permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, the local authority will be informed, regardless of whether or not local agencies have already been informed. The School will provide a named contact to liaise with the agencies to participate in supporting the absent pupil and attending any necessary reviews or other meetings. External agencies might include: West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board (0330 2227799), West Sussex Police 101, ext. 531355 and West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub 01403 229900

The School will inform the local authority of any case where a pupil is to be removed from the admissions register where the pupil:
- has been taken out of school by their parents and the School has received written notification that they are being educated outside the school system eg. home education
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school
- has been certified by the school Health Care Lead as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither they or her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- has been permanently excluded

The local authority will be notified as soon as the grounds for removal from the register are met, and no later than removing the pupil’s name from the register.

In line with local procedures, the School will also notify the local authority whenever a pupil’s name is removed or added to the admissions register at both standard and non-standard times for all pupils of 16.01.2019/15.01.2020/H/P
compulsory school age. This information will be sent immediately a pupil is taken off roll for leavers and within five school days for joiners, sending a new form for each data return.

This section outlines the procedures to be followed in the event that a pupil is found to be absent without previous parental notification.

Registration
All registration is completed electronically. We have two official registrations which fulfil our statutory requirements: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Should a pupil arrive after registration for any reason, they must report to the Office before going to lessons.

Missing Pupil Procedure

If, when collating the registers, staff in the Office find that a pupil is absent without this absence having been accounted for, they will follow the following procedure:

- Check that the pupil has not signed in/out
- Check office documentation (notification of absence via letter/ email from parents etc.)
- Carry out internal enquiries: check that the pupil is not in a Learning Support or Music lesson
- Contact both the pupil’s parents to inform them that their child has not been registered and try to establish their whereabouts, using email as well as telephoning all given numbers and leaving messages.

- **If parents respond and inform us that the pupil should be in school**
  - Go to classroom to check.
    - If pupil is present
      - Establish why they was not registered (and send report accordingly)
      - Contact parents to inform them that they are safe
    - If pupil is missing
      - Inform either the Head or the Deputy Heads in person; they will advise of further action, possibly involving:
        - Speaking to the pupil’s friends
        - Sounding the fire alarm
        - Contacting the police, with ongoing action agreed as the situation develops.
      - Keep parents informed
  - **If parents respond and inform us that the pupil is absent**
    - Remind them of absence procedure for notification (and report to the Head for follow up)
- **If parents do not respond**
  - If no response from either parent is received after 10 minutes, go to classroom to check whether pupil is present.
- **If pupil is present**
  - Establish why they was not registered (and send report accordingly)
  - Contact parents to inform them that they are safe
- **If pupil is missing**
  - Inform either the Head or the Deputy Heads in person; they will advise of further action, possibly involving:
    - Speaking to the pupil’s friends
    - Sounding the fire alarm
    - Contacting the police, with ongoing action agreed as the situation develops.
After every registration in which any issues were encountered, the member of office staff in charge should email a report to the Head and Deputy Heads detailing these issues (pupil not signing in, teacher error etc.) so that they can be promptly followed up. If a pupil is found not to have signed in or out, they will be issued with a comment.

**Absence from Lessons**
The School office informs teachers if a pupil has an authorised absence. If a pupil is absent for a lesson elsewhere (Music or Learning Support, for example, according to the published timetables) they will request permission from their teacher to leave the classroom. If a pupil is missing without good reason, teachers will inform the Office staff, who will then follow the appropriate steps of the procedure detailed above.

**Absence During a Visit**
If a pupil is found to be missing during a school visit away from Prebendal, then the following procedure should be followed. Please note that common sense should be the guiding principle in dealing with incidents of this nature.

a) The pupil’s friends and other members of staff should be questioned in order to establish when they were last seen
b) Staff should be detailed to search the immediate area, while others remain at the meeting point for an agreed and reasonable period of time
c) The SMT should be informed; they will advise on further action, possibly involving contacting parents, emergency contacts or the Police. NB Procedures outlined in the Visits Policy should minimise the possibility of this happening through adequate staff/pupil ratios, robust risk assessment, carrying of contact details and careful planning. Pupils are required to stay in small groups and rendezvous points should be arranged beforehand.

**Review**
This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team (SMT) and made available to parents via the website.

**Date of Last Review**: January 2019