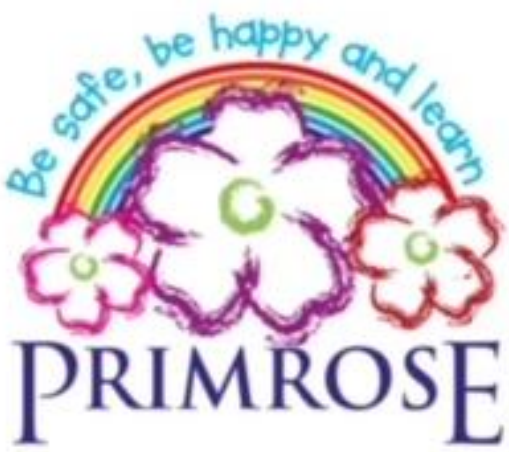
Attendance Policy



Signed by Chair of Governors:	
Date ratified by Governing Body:	September 2026
Date of Review:	September 2027

Introduction

For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Referrals to our Service, supported by Inclusion Support professionals, assume that pupils will attend. It is therefore very important that each pupil attends regularly as has been agreed with staff, pupil and parent/carer.

Why Regular Attendance is so Important

Learning – Any absence affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any child's absence disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends regularly and does not permit absence without good cause.

Safeguarding – A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility, as is promoting their welfare and life opportunities.

Promoting regular attendance

Helping to create a pattern, and expectation, of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, pupils and all members of staff.

To help with this we will:

- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates and rewards.
- Maintain daily contact in any period of absence.
- Help break down barriers for attendance by working with families.

The law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act1996 states that *' the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable a/ to age, ability and aptitude and b/ to any special educational needs he/she may have - either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'*

The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Understanding types of absence

Every half day absent from the centre has to be classified by the centre (not the parents) as either Authorised or Unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the centre for a valid reason such as illness, hospital appointments which unavoidably fall in school time and emergencies.

NB: If a medical appointment with a GP or a dental appointment has to be taken in school time the centre expects your child to attend before or after the appointment as normal.

Unauthorised absences include:

- Parents/ carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which are not properly explained

- Shopping, looking after other children, parents/carers birthdays or pupil birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

Any child may be off school because they are ill but sometimes they can just be reluctant to attend for a wide variety of reasons. Any problems over attendance should be discussed with the pupil's class teacher, parents/carers and child.

Absence procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence. This can be by a telephone call from the parent/carer or messaging the reporting absence account on Class Dojo.
- Maintain daily contact for the period of the absence unless agreed otherwise.
- Where absence is for a hospital appointment prior evidence of the letter is required.
- Where absence is for a medical appointment with a GP or a dental appointment prior evidence of an appointment card is required.

Where pupils are dual registered, it is the responsibility of the home school to contact the Centre each day for attendance information. For dual registered pupils, we will support the home school's attendance procedures, including for escalation to Attendance and Prosecution Services.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence, and subsequent days, if we have had no communication. If no communication has been made on day 1 and the child is subject to a child protection plan, we will complete a home visit that day. If no communication has been made by lunchtime day 2, we will complete a home visit.
- 3rd day of absence with daily communication, we will complete a home visit if the child is subject to a child protection plan.

- 5th day of absence with daily communication, we will complete a home visit to offer any further support the family need.
- If your child's absence becomes a cause for concern you will be contacted by a senior member of staff to discuss this further, this will take the form of a phone call, letter home or invitation to a meeting in the centre.
- Discuss the matter with the Attendance and Prosecution Service if the matter cannot be resolved.
- In extreme cases your child's place may be withdrawn when support and strategies have been exhausted

On return to school:

Following any absence from school the parent/carer is requested to notify the school in writing of the reason for the absence. The Headteacher will only consider authorising any absence upon receipt of written notification – any absences will therefore remain unauthorised until their time.

NB: If your child has been in hospital a discharge letter from the hospital could be provided.

Lateness

The school day starts at 8.45am and all pupils should be in by this time. Registers close at 9.15 and if a pupil arrives between these times they will receive a late mark, unless a special arrangement has been made. After 9.15 a pupil will receive a mark that shows them to be on the site but it will not count as a present mark. Special arrangements in individual cases may be put in place.

Requesting a leave of absence

Requesting any leave of absence during term time will affect your child's education just as much as any other absence and we would ask parents /carers to help us by not requesting any such leave.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time and we follow any guidance from the Government and DFE on this.

Any request for a leave of absence during term time should be made in advance and in writing to the Headteacher a minimum of 3 weeks before the requested first day of absence using the attached form. Any leave of absence forms received within 3 weeks of the requested first day of absence will not be considered and any subsequent absence will be deemed as unauthorised.

A decision will be made within 5 working days of receipt of the leave of absence request form and parents/carers informed by phone and/or email of the decision. Parents/carers are advised not to plan, book or pay for anything in advance in relation to the leave of absence application until they have been notified of the Headteacher's decision.

Authorised leave of absence will only be granted if the Headteacher considers that there are "exceptional circumstances" relating to the application. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. 'Unavoidable' means that it could not be reasonably scheduled at another time. Absence during term time for holidays is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.

Recording and Reporting

We constantly monitor absence and attendance to show us areas of concern and where improvements need to be made. This is done on a weekly basis for each child as well as a more in-depth analysis every half term. Pupils could be put onto Attendance Watch if the school feels the pupils need further support to improve or maintain their attendance in order to gain a full learning experience within the school environment. We have a duty to report our data on attendance to the Governing body each term.

Pupil Leave of Absence Request Form

Pupil Details

Child's full name: _____

Date of birth: _____Year/Class: _____

Parent/Carer Details

Parent/Carer's full name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Leave Requested

First day of absence: _____Last day of absence: _____

Total number of school days requested: _____Expected date of return to school:_____

Reason for the requested absence

Please provide full details of why the leave of absence is being requested:

I understand that leave of absence during term time is not normally authorised unless the school considers there to be exceptional circumstances. I understand that the decision to authorise the absence rests with the

Headteacher/Principal and that an unauthorised absence may result in a penalty notice being issued in accordance with the applicable rules.

Parent/Carer signature: _____

Date: _____

For School Use Only

Request received on: _____

Decision:

☐ Approved

☐ Partially approved

☐ Not approved

Reason/Comments:

Headteacher/Principal name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____