



Comper Foundation Stage School

Attendance Policy

(draft – to be ratified by govs at term 6 FGB)

Updated:	March 2023	
Review:	March 2025	
Signed CoG		Date:
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Comper Foundation Stage School Attendance Policy is split into two parts due to the nature of the makeup of the school. Part 1 of the policy is relevant to the children on roll at Comper Daycare and Nursery School. Part 2 of the policy is relevant to the reception children at Comper who are on roll at SS Mary and John Primary School. As a result, for the children in Reception, we follow the SS Mary and John Primary School Attendance Policy. Please see part 2 if your child is in reception.

As a local authority-maintained school, we are guided in our approach to attendance by the government document 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance.'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Part 1 – Comper Daycare and Nursery School

Principles

Comper Nursery School staff and governors recognise that nursery education is non-statutory. However, nursery places are a valuable resource and it is expected that parents/carers will view their children's attendance as a serious commitment to the school and that they will avoid wasting a place which could be used by others.

Children who attend nursery regularly make more secure attachments with staff at the school, are better able to engage with the learning environment and have better early years outcomes.

Policy Objectives:

1. To promote partnership between parents/carers and the school, working for the benefit of the children's learning and positive wellbeing
2. To ensure good progress for all children and excellent early years outcomes
3. To encourage a positive attitude to punctuality and attendance from an early age
4. To achieve a 96% + attendance rate
5. To involve other agencies when all possible school-based supportive measures have been put in place and a child's attendance is still cause for concern. The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors.

Responsibilities of Comper Foundation Stage School

- To provide positive messages to parents/carers about the importance of good attendance.
- To keep records of attendance which clearly distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence, show lateness so that patterns may be addressed and provide accurate information on actual attendance to enable monitoring and evaluation of attendance rates.
- To recognise that poor attendance and/or punctuality could be a safeguarding issue and to respond in accordance with the Safeguarding policy & procedures. For children already known to services, poor attendance indicates that the child is at increased risk.



- To inform the Headteacher if staff have concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality. The Headteacher (or Designated Safeguarding Lead) should inform the Children's Social Care Assessment team if poor attendance indicates that the child's welfare could be in jeopardy.
- To share attendance figures with parents and carers and to target attendance where it has been an issue and set in place strategies to support improvement.

Responsibilities of Parents / Carers

- To bring and collect their children promptly.
- If their child is absent from daycare or nursery, parents must call or email daily with a reason for their child's absence. If there is no contact, we will attempt to contact the parents by 9.30am at the latest. We recognise that daycare and nursery children are likely to have some absences due to their own illness or illness of other members of their families.
- Where possible families will take holidays out of term time to reduce the time that a child is missing their early years education. Comper foundation stage school understand that there are unforeseen family circumstances that sometimes mean that a child has to be taken out of school during term time for a short period of time. All unforeseen circumstances will be treated on an individual basis. The headteacher must be informed and a holiday form must be completed prior to the period of absence.
- Most absence during term time that is not due to illness will be regarded as unauthorised even when it has been agreed with the headteacher. There may be exceptional circumstances based on compassionate grounds where the child's absence will be authorised during term time.

Strategies for promoting good attendance

- An engaging curriculum with a broad range of exciting enrichment activities will be in place across the term to ensure that there is a strong incentive for children to want to come to school. Staff will ensure that children and parents are well informed about the progression of termly activities and enrichment events
- Staff will take the responsibility of notifying the attendance officer and/or a member of the leadership team if they have a concern about a child's attendance and will have an initial conversation with parents/carers
- Parents/carers will receive reports on their child's level of attendance at parent-teacher consultation meetings (twice a year) and in an annual report (once a year)
- The positive reasons for good attendance will be regularly reported in the school newsletter

Systems to monitor attendance and punctuality.

Any absence with no prior explanation will prompt a first day contact. Systems to monitor attendance will include:

- Daily registers will be taken in the morning and afternoon using Integris in Nursery and Tapestry in Daycare.
- A telephone call before 9.30am to establish the reason for non-attendance. The reason for non-attendance will be noted on Integris in the child's daily register. For children arriving for afternoon sessions a follow up phone call will be made by 12.30pm at the latest.
- The attendance officer will always inform the headteacher of children who are absent in the day to safeguard vulnerable children.



- If there is no answer to the initial phone call, then there will be a follow up email to the parent to ask for a reason for the absence.
- Further follow up telephone calls will be made throughout the day and week if unexplained absences continue.
- The attendance officer will always inform the headteacher of children who are absent on the day to safeguard vulnerable children.
- If there is still no response to an absence via phone or email contact after 2 days, then a letter will be sent to the home and a home visit may be deemed necessary. The decision may be made to take further safeguarding action.
- Further home visits may well be considered if communication and attendance remains very poor or inconsistent or there is concern about the lack of parental response to the school. In agreement with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, home visits may be unannounced.

Long-term unexplained absence

We have the following procedure in the event of regular or long-term absence due to circumstances other than illness:

1. The key person discusses concerns with the headteacher, or the attendance officer may raise a concern with the headteacher.
2. Depending on the conversation between the key person and the headteacher, either one will have an informal discussion with the parents/carers preferably in person, but if not then by telephone. If it is the key person having the discussion, they will report back to the headteacher. If the headteacher has the discussion, they will inform the key person of any outcomes or actions.
3. In all cases of long-term unexplained absence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed, and they will consider whether the absence indicates a safeguarding risk. If safeguarding concerns are identified the school Safeguarding policy and procedures will be followed. This may include an unannounced home visit.
4. If a child is still regularly absent or has not returned to school, The Headteacher will write to the parent/carers enclosing a copy of the policy and inviting them to come to school to discuss the matter further.
5. If the situation remains unresolved and the child is still frequently absent or has not returned then the Headteacher will write to the parents/carers withdrawing the place. A copy of the letter will be filed in the school office.

Monitoring and evaluation of attendance data

The headteacher and attendance officer will meet twice a term to look at overall whole school and year group attendance patterns and to monitor those children who are below 96% and below 90%. Concerns will be highlighted, and actions agreed. In the first instance these will be to discuss the issue with the parents/carers and to explore what barriers there are to better attendance.

The school will strive to provide a healthy balance of supporting and challenging families to improve their attendance, always emphasising the importance of good attendance providing positive outcomes for children.



Attendance figures will be shared regularly on the newsletter for parents and staff to see. This will always be published on the school website.

The Governing body will be provided with a termly update on attendance figures through the various committee and full governing body meetings.

Part 2 – Comper Reception Children

St Mary & St John CE Primary School Attendance Policy

As a Church of England Primary School, we are committed to making St Mary & St John an inclusive environment, fostering curiosity, spirituality, creativity and respect. At our school we want everyone to be valued, to explore the joy of learning, and to achieve their full potential.

Aims

This policy has been developed within St Mary & St John Primary School to ensure an effective approach to attaining and promoting high levels of pupil attendance. We want children at our school to develop good habits of punctuality and attendance, to allow them the maximum opportunity to explore the joy of learning and achieve their full potential as described in our vision statement.

This policy provides clear guidelines about how we will promote and attain high levels of pupil attendance. This will ensure that all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves, and each other, and can strive to attain them.

Objectives

1. To promote partnership between parents/carers and the school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
2. To ensure good progress for all children
3. To encourage a positive attitude to punctuality and attendance
4. To achieve a 96.5% + attendance rate
5. To involve other agencies when all possible school-based supportive measures have been put in place and a child's attendance is still cause for concern. The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors.

Procedures for implementation Expectations of parents/carers:

- To make sure their children attend school, aiming for an attendance rate of 100% unless they are not well enough to attend school
- To contact school as soon as it is reasonably practical (e.g. before 9.00am) whenever their child is unable to attend
- To make sure any absence is followed by a written (email) or spoken explanation (telephone call) of why the child was absent and for what period of time if it is more than one day
- To make sure that their child arrives in school on time (gates are locked promptly at 9am), well prepared for the school day.



- To contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To try to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours wherever possible. Hospital appointments will obviously be an exception to this as they are allocated appointments.
- Not take children out of school for holidays during term time, unless there are significant exceptional circumstances
- Not take children out of school for occasional days, unless there are significant exceptional circumstances.

Expectations of school:

- To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance.
- To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted.
- To ensure regular, efficient, and accurate recording of presence / absence
- To make early contact with parents/carers when a child fails to attend
- To refer to appropriate support agencies as required
- To model good attendance as described in the staff absence policy

Expectations of pupils:

- To attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate of 96.5% to 100%
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day

Expectations of governors:

- To monitor the effectiveness of this policy through regular Attendance report and Headteacher reports (to Governing Body)
- In the case of parent governors, to support the school in encouraging good attendance and punctuality, through role modelling good attendance and punctuality (gates close promptly at 9am)

Punctuality and Lateness

- Gates open at 8.40am and close promptly at 9.00am ready for the register to be taken.
- Children arriving at school after the register has been taken, but before 9:30am, will be classed as late. If a child arrives after 9.30am, this will be recorded as an absence.
- Persistent lateness If a child arrives after the register has been taken but before 9.30am it will be recorded that the child arrived late.
- If a child is repeatedly late, the school will contact parents/carers expressing concerns about late arrival and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the school leadership team will invite the parents/carers in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance and Engagement Team if appropriate.

Unauthorised absence



- If no information regarding the absence of a child has been received by 9.00am, the office will telephone a parent/carer to check the reason for absence. If there is no initial reason given for the absence, either verbal or written (email), or no letter of explanation is received on the child's return, the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Authorised absence

- The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Headteacher or delegated to another member of the school leadership team, following statutory requirements and the school's policy on attendance.
- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from a parent/carer that the child is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence and a note or verbal explanation on the child's return, if the absence is longer than one day.
- If the child has an urgent medical appointment with the doctor or dentist that cannot be made outside school hours, parents/carers must inform the school in advance. If the school has been informed in advance, the child's absence will be considered as an authorised absence. Where possible other siblings should remain in school. The school expects children to return from appointments as soon as possible. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents/carers.
- An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents/carers give a reason if the absences are persistent.
- In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request that the parent/carer provides confirmation from the GP that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

Holidays during term time

- There will be no authorised holidays in term time (Pupil Registration Regulations, 1st September 2013). Requests for absence in term time will be considered in exceptional circumstances and at the Headteacher's discretion.
- If a request for absence is not authorised but the parent/carer still chooses to take their child out of school, the school will contact the County Attendance Team and a penalty of at least £60 per parent/carer per child will be issued. This penalty will escalate to £120 per parent/carer per child if not paid promptly. If this penalty remains unpaid parents/carers will receive a summons to Oxford Magistrate Court.
- Children may be taken off the school roll after twenty continuous unauthorised days out of school (four weeks) from the start of their absence. The Oxfordshire County Council Engagement Team will then be informed.
- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents/carers, the parents/carers will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the school will use the contacts list provided by the parents/carers and the attendance officer will follow the calls up with and email.
- Where there has been no response, or no explanation, the school will visit the home address.
- If a child's attendance is below 90%, the school will initially contact parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the school leadership team will invite the parents/carers in to discuss the issue and a parent contract may be implemented (in line with county guidance).



Strategies for promoting good attendance

- An engaging curriculum with a broad range of exciting enrichment activities will be in place across the term to ensure that there is a strong incentive for children to want to come to school. Staff will ensure that children and parents are well informed about the progression of termly activities and enrichment events
- Staff will take the responsibility of notifying the attendance officer and/or a member of the leadership team if they have a concern about a child's attendance and will have an initial conversation with parents/carers
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- The positive reasons for good attendance will be regularly reported in the school newsletter

Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness

- Attendance data will be checked twice a term by the headteacher and attendance officer and actions to support parents to improve their child's attendance if it is below 96% will be taken
- The school will work closely with the Council Attendance and Engagement Team in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the school.
- The school will evaluate the success of the procedures by measuring the annual attendance percentage against their target throughout the year.
- Attendance will be reported to the Governing Body through regular Attendance and Headteacher reports.