

Discretionary Pupil Absence Policy

Author: Sarah Hawker (Headteacher)
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Park Street Church of England Primary School is a school with a Christian character and seeks to ensure that all who learn and work within the school are enabled to experience *'life in all its fullness'* [Jn 10.10] - to be people *'fully alive'* [St Irenaeus].

To this end, all of our work, our policies and our procedures seek to ensure that we honour God, love our neighbour as ourselves, do to others as we would have them do to us, we don't judge others, and we seek to be good stewards of God's creation. These basic tenets of our Christian faith inform our values of "Honesty and Respect, Friendship and Kindness, Learning and Fun."

1. Introduction

The Governing Body of Park Street CofE Primary School recognises that the school community consists of many visiting academics or similar families from countries around the world, who may be required, from time-to-time to work overseas for a longer-term period.

This policy is provided as guidance for the Headteacher in applications for longer-term absence from the school.

2. Authority

The Headteacher has the ultimate decision-making power in responding to requests for longer-term absence. The Headteacher's decision is final, and there shall be no appeals.

3. Legal Requirements

All children must receive a full-time education, according to the law. Therefore, any longer-term absences requested must include details of how the child/ren absent will receive their full-time education.

If children will be receiving their full-time education by attending a different school, then proof of this must be provided to Park Street CofE Primary School. Park Street CofE Primary School may need to legally remove the child/ren from their roll in these circumstances, but will have discretion as below to re-enrol the child/ren on return.

4. Discretionary Leave

To assist the Headteacher assessing the granting of discretionary longer-term absences, the following guidelines need to be addressed in the request:

Length of Absence

- **Less than 2 weeks:** The pupils should not be enrolled in another school, but will need full-time education. Park Street CofE Primary School may, if practical, provide materials for this learning.
- **More than 2 weeks to 6 weeks:** It is expected that pupils will be enrolled in another school, or have other educational provision. If enrolled in another school, then proof of this must be sent to Park Street CofE Primary School. It is unlikely that Park Street CofE Primary School will be able to provide materials for longer-term learning.
- **More than 6 weeks:** If the absence is for longer than 6 weeks, then the leave will not be granted. If 6 weeks have been taken, the Headteacher may consider a short extension, but only if there is a set date for return.

Timing of Absence

It is very unlikely that the school will grant discretionary long-term absence for absences between the beginning of term in September and mid-October. The reason for this is that this period encompasses school census, and if a pupil is not on the school roll at census date, then the school will receive no funding for that pupil.

Curriculum

During the pupil's absence, they may not be following the National Curriculum, even though they are receiving education. Park Street CofE Primary School does not have the resources to assist in catching up with missed parts of the National Curriculum, but may be able to provide details of missed topics which can be caught up outside of school.

Loss of Place

Even if long-term discretionary leave has been granted, a place on return is not guaranteed, and any parents/carers applying must bear this in mind. This is because the school is legally required to offer places to certain categories of children, and if children of those categories apply to the absent pupil's class during the absence, then a pupil granted longer-term discretionary leave may lose their place if the class becomes full.

5. Return to School

If the child/ren have been removed from the school roll at Park Street CofE Primary School (as required by law if they have been attending another school) then the parent(s)/Carer(s) of the child/ren must follow the school's standard Admissions Arrangements before returning.

The admissions authority will take into account the granted discretionary long-term absence when assessing readmission.

If a child does not return on the expected day, and no communication has been received requesting an extension, then that pupil will be immediately removed from the roll.