FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
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Attendance Policy

This policy outlines student attendance expectations to support student learning and maintain a consistent, respectful learning environment at First Presbyterian School.

Please Note: This attendance policy applies only to students enrolled in Kindergarten (Pips) through 8th Grade (Sequoias). Children enrolled in the Preschool program are not subject to the requirements outlined in this policy. Preschool families are encouraged to attend based on their individual needs and schedules.

1. Excused Absences

Definition:

Excused absences include: Illness, medical or dental appointments, family emergencies, religious holidays, school-sponsored activities, and pre-approved family trips or events (with prior notification and approval).

Guidelines:

- If families know in advance of an upcoming absence (such as for a religious holiday, family trip, or special event), we ask that you provide at least 48 hours' notice in writing by emailing school@firstpres-ep.org or calling the school office.
- For excused absences that cannot meet the 48-hour notice requirement (such as sudden illness or family emergencies), the office should be notified as soon as possible via email.
- Appropriate documentation is required for the absence to be considered excused. This may include:
  - A doctor's note
  - A written explanation emailed to the school office

Timely communication ensures the absence is not counted against the student.

- While there is no fixed limit for excused absences, excessive absences may prompt a conversation with school leadership to ensure students are receiving sufficient instructional time and support.

2. Unexcused Absences

Definition:

An absence is considered unexcused if: It does not meet the criteria for an excused absence and required notice or documentation is not provided.

Limits:

- Maximum of five (5) unexcused absences per semester
- No more than ten (10) unexcused absences per academic year

Support Plan:

- After three (3) unexcused absences, families will be contacted by school administration to schedule a mandatory meeting with the Director and/or Assistant Director.
- An attendance plan will be developed with the family to support consistent attendance.
- Ongoing unexcused absences or lack of communication may lead to disciplinary action or further administrative intervention.

3. Tardy Policy
Definition:
A student is considered tardy if they arrive after 8:40 AM.
Arrival Protocol:
- A parent or guardian must sign in students arriving after 8:30 AM at the school office.

Tardy Accumulation:
- Three (3) tardies = one (1) unexcused absence
- The tardy count will reset after an unexcused absence is accrued.

4. Make-Up Work
Students are responsible for completing all missed assignments and learning activities.
- For excused absences, students will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete make-up work, as determined by the classroom teacher.
- For unexcused absences, make-up work may be provided at the teacher's discretion and is not guaranteed.

Important: Because First Presbyterian School uses a Project-Based Learning (PBL) model, many learning activities involve collaborative projects or presentations. If a student misses several days, especially during key stages of a project, they may not be able to fully participate or contribute. Teachers will make reasonable efforts to support students in staying caught up, but some learning experiences may not be replicable.

If you have any questions regarding this policy or need to report an absence, please contact the school office at school@firstpres-ep.org.

Thank you for your partnership in supporting your child's learning through consistent and timely attendance.