



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

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Autumn 2016

To be reviewed autumn 2017

RESPONSIBILITY

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AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To encourage all pupils to achieve their maximum potential
- To recognise and reward pupils who achieve more than 96% attendance during the school year.
- To encourage parent/carers to play the vital role in supporting the school and encouraging their child to reach good attendance levels.
- To monitor and track pupils attendance and punctuality through effective systems and to utilise this information to support the school and parents improve attendance.

THE LEGAL POSITION

The 1996 Education Act and related legislation states that:

- Parents/Carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school. Failure by parents/carers to ensure that the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

EXPECTATIONS

WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF OUR PUPILS:

1. To attend regularly and on time, ready to learn every day.
2. To be prepared for the day with any appropriate equipment eg. PE bag, outdoor clothing for visits etc.
3. To report to the school office, should they arrive after 8.45am
4. To maintain a safe, caring attitude towards themselves and peers.

WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF PARENTS/CARERS:

1. To fulfil their parental responsibility by encouraging/supporting their children to attend school regularly
2. To ensure that they contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend and that their child returns to school with an absence letter.
3. To ensure that their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the school day (equipment, homework etc)
4. To inform the class teacher and school office of any time their child is unable to attend school eg. Appointments or illness etc.

5. To speak to the school in confidence, about any difficulties or problems that will affect their child's attendance
6. To respect the need for regular and consistent attendance and wherever possible make every effort to not request 'leave' during term time

WHAT THE PARENTS/CARERS CAN EXPECT OF THE SCHOOL:

1. A broad and balanced education that is dependent upon regular attendance at school.
2. The encouragement and promotion of good attendance through awards/rewards.
3. Regular monitoring and accurate recording of attendance.
4. Contact with parents/carers when a pupil fails to attend school with no good reason given.
5. Prompt action to be taken where problems are identified.
6. Close liaison with external agencies (where appropriate) to assist and support parents/carers and pupils where necessary.
7. Regular communication to parents/carers.

Section 2: ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

A) REGISTER PROCEDURE

- Registration is at 8.45am each morning and 12.50pm (Phase 1 and 2) and 1.20pm (Phase 3) for the afternoon session.
- Pupils are expected to enter class prior to morning registration where a learning activity is provided.
- Class teachers will insert a mark for every pupil whether it is a present or an absent mark on the SIMs registration system. All marks must be accurately recorded.
- For consistency across school registers must be completed sent electronically to the office by 9.00am.
- If pupils arrive after registration is complete they will be deemed to be late, in the interests of Safeguarding children arriving late must report to the office.

B) RESPONDING TO LATENESS

- Pupils arriving after morning or afternoon registration time must report to the school office. The Attendance officer will amend the register as appropriate.
- Parents/carers will be contacted for pupils who have been identified as being regularly late.
- Parents/Carers of pupils who are persistently late will be invited into the school to discuss the situation.
- Good punctuality is recognised when a pupil is on time for more than 96% of the registration sessions.

C) DEALING WITH ABSENCE NOTES

- Class teachers should encourage pupils to bring absence notes on the first day of return.
- Class teachers should seek guidance from the Executive Head/Head of School if they are unsure whether to authorise an absence or not, this may be done by consultation with the Attendance officer or Inclusion Manager .
- A letter would be sent out by the office to parents/carers requesting confirmation of any outstanding absences for which no notes have been received.
- Home contact may be made by the Attendance Officer or Inclusion Manager if any absences are still unauthorised. If this is unsuccessful then the case may be referred to the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST)

D) THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE TO POOR ATTENDANCE

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of their child's absence.
- The office will record any incoming messages from parents/carers and pass this information on to the class teacher.
- The school will endeavour to contact home on the first day of absence in cases where no satisfactory reason has been received to explain a pupil's absence.
- When a pupil is absent and contact cannot be made by phone after 2 days, on the 3rd day of absence a home visit may be made by the Attendance Officer and Inclusion Manager.
- Class teachers will target pupils with known attendance/punctuality problems and will notify the Attendance Officer/Inclusion Manager. Where appropriate, strategies will be employed in order to address the attendance of individual pupils. This could include working with the Learning Mentor, contact with parents/carers and School Attendance Panels.
- If a class teacher has concerns regarding a child's attendance the first step is to talk to the Attendance Officer,
- At the end of each half term, attendance data for the whole school is evaluated by the Attendance Officer and Inclusion Manager and on occasions an Inclusion Service representative.
- Whole school attendance is reviewed on a weekly basis to identify attendance patterns and issues. Appropriate action will be taken.
- Individual attendance records of each pupil will be sent to parents/carers on a regular basis.

E) MAINTAINING GOOD ATTENDANCE

Collection of Attendance Data/Analysis of Attendance Data

- Attendance Data for the whole school is reviewed by the Attendance Officer on a weekly basis.

- Attendance of individual pupils who have been identified as a cause for concern will be monitored on a weekly basis and reviewed half-termly by the Attendance Officer and Inclusion Manager.
- Details of the weekly attendance levels of identified pupils will be given to the class teacher for daily monitoring and quick identification should there be further deterioration.
- At the end of each term an analysis will be undertaken of school attendance data with the Attendance and Inclusion Service. This will be translated onto the School Attendance Plan (monitoring section).
- Termly and annual reviews will also be undertaken in partnership with the Attendance and inclusion Service.
- Penalty notices will be issued where deemed appropriate by the Attendance and Inclusion Service.

F) REWARDS AND TARGETS

- Incentives will be made available to promote and maintain good attendance levels. These include:
 - i) Prizes/certificates for 100% attendance each term (e.g. perfect attendance pencil).
 - ii) Most improved attendance awards
 - iii) Best Weekly attendance rewarded by a visit from Huckleberry Bear (linked with SEAL)

G) INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS/CARERS

It is vitally important that parents/carers are actively engaged in promoting good attendance.

- An attendance leaflet will be provided to all new pupils and parents/carers outlining the school's attendance procedures. It will contain information on expectations, how to contact the school if the pupil is absent, times of the school day, late procedures, staff they may need to contact, holidays, authorised and unauthorised absence.
- The school will react as swiftly and as sensitively as possible to any parental concerns. Parents/carers will be encouraged to make contact with the school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance.

H) RE-INTEGRATION INTO SCHOOL AFTER ABSENCE

- The school will endeavour to support pupils returning to school after long periods of absence with appropriate measures as deemed necessary to specific children/situations.

I) DELETING CHILDREN FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL

- Current practice involves the school/ A & I and CME team working closely to identify children who have been absent for a 4 week period and pursuing 'reasonable enquiries' prior to taking children off roll.

Section 3: ATTENDANCE ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

GOVERNORS

- Keep an overview of attendance figures regularly, through reports provided by the Attendance Officer and Senior Inclusion manager.

HEADTEACHER

- Overall responsibility for attendance within the school.
- To provide advice and support to members of staff on attendance issues
- Attend school attendance panels if appropriate
- Setting of attendance targets for the school.

Senior Inclusion Manager

- Provide regular update on attendance to governors (termly), (jointly produced report with the Attendance Officer)
- To meet regularly with the Attendance Officer to review attendance statistics, half termly/termly review meetings. To take any action as appropriate.
- To work with and be responsible for producing and reviewing Annual School Attendance Plan and Policy.
- To work with other schools and agencies, to promote attendance within the school.
- Attend School Attendance Panels as appropriate
- Setting of attendance targets for the school.
- Liaising with the LEA over Attendance targets and school strategy.
- Evaluating targets through termly line management meetings with Attendance Officer.

Attendance Officer

- Provide regular reports on attendance to Senior Inclusion Manager (termly) for feedback to Governors.
- To liaise with and identify cases to be referred to MAST
- To monitor attendance on a weekly basis and liaise with Senior Inclusion Manager and seek external support as appropriate.
- To work with individual pupils/classes where attendance has been identified as a concern.
- To provide rewards/awards where appropriate
- Attend School Attendance Panels as appropriate

- To maintain the SIMS (attendance database), and update records on a weekly basis.
- To oversee absence calls made
- Update pupil database, personal attendance records and figures as required
- Enter all terms, dates and holidays on a yearly basis to ensure the registers comply with the database.
- Ensuring that all morning and afternoon registers have been collected, correctly marked and returned.

CLASS TEACHERS

- To accurately mark the registers as per guidelines and using the appropriate codes for absence and return to the school office as soon as possible.
- To seek advice from the Headteacher on any issues relating to attendance, this may be done by consultation with the Senior Inclusion Manager or Attendance officer .
- Have regular discussions about the importance of good attendance.
- Deal with absence notes as per school guidelines.
- Monitor individual as well as whole class attendance.
- Identify trends in the attendance of individual pupils and report accordingly.
- Liaise with Attendance Officer or Senior Inclusion Manager regarding any queries surrounding absence, eg. forged notes, odd reasons etc.

ATTENDANCE AND INCLUSION

- To support the school with developing and reviewing an annual attendance plan and implementing any actions.
- To provide (EWO) service to any referrals received, and feedback within 5 days.

AUTHORISING ABSENCE

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent/carer has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered, or when no explanation is forthcoming at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Schools should communicate to parents/carers their policies with regard to the notification and categorisation of absence. Some parents/carers such as those whose first language is not English, may experience difficulty in providing notes. In such cases, schools should seek alternative arrangements, for example through a neighbour, sibling or translator.

Schools are advised to keep all absence notes for at least a term.

Absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil is absent with leave (defined if 'leave granted by any persons authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school')
- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs.
- The pupil is a child of Traveller parents/carers who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return.
- There is a family bereavement.
- The pupil has a Local Authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has given leave of absence.
- The pupil is attending another school for a placement.
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion. In authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupils overall pattern of attendance should be considered. Prior agreement must be sought by the parent in these cases.
- Leave of absence may only be granted by the school in exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers should be reminded that they cannot expect, as of right, that the school will agree to leave during term time.

Absence should be unauthorised if:

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent/carer.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil is staying at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the DFES guidance suggests that absence in such cases should be granted only in exceptional circumstances).
- The pupil is absent for expected special occasions eg. the pupils birthday.
- The pupil is away from the school on leave for a period of time longer than that negotiated with the school.
- The pupil is on a family holiday or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the leave being taken and instead seek retrospective approval on their return.

Further advice on the authorisation of absence can be obtained from the Headteacher or Senior Inclusion Manager or from the DFES publication:-

'Social Inclusion, Student Support Circular No 10/99- (Annex A)