



## **Attendance Policy**

### **Rationale**

- Regular attendance at school is a pre-requisite of a good education. The curriculum is carefully planned assuming full attendance. Any child who does not attend school is placed at a disadvantage and life chances are therefore impaired.
- The school recognises that it is the parents'/carers' legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school and teachers will play their part in ensuring maximum attendance of children at school.
- Regular attendance and good punctuality reflects commitment, maximises potential educational achievement, and presents a positive public image for the school.
- Truancy/unauthorised absence represents a significant waste of educational resources, puts children 'at risk', contributes to general disaffection and potential juvenile crime and thus should be a source of grave concern to parents/carers and teachers alike.
- It is not enough for the school to assume that regular attendance is automatic and that absence is always an indication of home difficulties or lack of parental support. As a school we are committed to the idea that education is a life-long activity and thus the ethos of the school is that pupils should be happy to attend school.

### **Aims**

- 1 To enable maximum pupil attendance through valuing high attendance rates.
- 2 To encourage pupils to develop habits/routines that will ensure good punctuality and attendance beyond their school days.
- 3 To encourage pupils to take good advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly.
- 4 To recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and work in partnership with parents/carers and the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)/other agencies to address any difficulties.
- 5 To provide an effective and efficient system for the monitoring of attendance.
- 6 To identify patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and work to resolve any personal/social/academic difficulties.

### **Practice**

- 1 The procedures for the completion of attendance records are that class teachers complete registers within half an hour of the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions, and office staff then make contact with parents on the first day of any unexplained absence.
- 2 During the first term in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), parents are sent an information leaflet on attendance setting out procedures and expectations for pupils' attendance. Any child joining after EYFS receives this as part of a welcome pack.
- 3 Class teachers are expected to keep accurate records of attendance, and office staff follow up absences and refer concerns to the Attendance Leader (Headteacher).
- 4 The Attendance Leader, supported by named member of office team responsible for attendance data, regularly analyses attendance across the school (at least half termly) and follows a clear procedure when attendance drops:
  - A standard letter is sent to parents when attendance falls below 90%, regardless of reason for absence. Where there is a specific reason (hospital visit, bereavement, but not holiday) discretion may be used in not sending a letter but contact should be made via a telephone call to ensure parents are aware and to establish any support strategies that can be agreed.
  - A standard letter is sent to parents when the number of 'lates' to school reaches 10.
  - If attendance falls below 85% a second letter is sent to families requesting they contact the school to discuss their child's attendance.
  - Where letters have been sent, and an improvement in the child's attendance is not evident, the Attendance Leader will usually contact the parent/carer by telephone to discuss the

absence and offer reasonable support/advice in improving attendance. This may also involve discussions with the child.

- A referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice may be made where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence: a warning letter will be sent to parents, with a three week timescale for improvement. If improvement is not evident within this time, an application for a fixed penalty notice will be made
- A referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice will be made for 10 sessions (5 days) unauthorised holiday
- When absence is persistent or does not improve, a referral to Pupil Entitlement (Investigation) will be made and court action may be taken

5 Requests for 'withdrawal from learning' for medical appointments and other reasons, except illness, are made by parents before the absence. No retrospective authorisation will be given, except in exceptional circumstances such as a family bereavement. No absence will be authorised for holiday except in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances will be rare and may include such issues as families in the forces or a serious illness in the immediate family. Holiday will not be granted for reasons of cost or because the parent is unable to get the time off work in the holidays, unless this is for a specific and evidenced reason i.e. the forces, exceptional events. The Attendance Leader will complete these forms on behalf of the Governing Body.

6 The Attendance Leader will use the school's SIMs system to monitor unauthorised absence, patterns of absence, lateness and absence of siblings. The Attendance Administrative Assistant will manage the system to ensure records are up to date, correct codes are entered and first day contact made.

7 If a child is absent without authorisation for 10 days without explanation, the EWO must be informed immediately.

8 The Education and Inspection Act 2006 places a statutory duty on the local authority to establish the identities of children missing education.

- If a child fails to start at school, enquiries should be made with Admissions to establish whether the child will be starting. The Admissions Assistant should also attempt to contact the family. The Educational Welfare Officer should be informed by the Attendance Leader. If a Common Transfer File (CTF) has been received by the school it should be uploaded to the S2S website.
- When a family disappears, or a child ceases to attend, for ten school days, without explanation, every effort will be made to trace the child by the school. Where the child's attendance is low, the absence unexplained or unusual, or the child is deemed to be 'at risk', immediate contact should be made with the EWO.
- Any unexplained, continuous absence of any child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan must automatically be treated as the highest priority and the duty team of social and caring services contacted immediately.

9 Children can only be taken off role when contact has been made by the receiving school and the CTF file transferred. All other reasons (disappearance, moving abroad/returning to home country) will necessitate contact and advice from the EWO.

10 The school will encourage good attendance by:

- Informing parents of their child's attendance at parents' evenings. Class lists will be generated and given to teachers.
- Letters will be sent to parents annually to inform them of their child's annual record of attendance.
- All new parents receive an Attendance Leaflet outlining the expectations for good attendance and the strategies we use to ensure this
- Annual prizes will be given to children who have 100% attendance for the year. No discretion may be used: any absence, authorised or unauthorised, will mean the prize is not awarded.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Headteacher will monitor and evaluate the policy

Policy writer: Pupil Support Committee  
Attendance Leader: Helen Williamson  
Attendance administrator: Mrs Katie White

Reviewed: May 2017  
Review Period: Annual  
Signed: Jo Newton-Smith