

# Attendance Policy

## CONTEXT

Regular and punctual school attendance is of vital importance in ensuring that all students have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. Students should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless there is a reason for the absence that is unavoidable. There is a school expectation that every pupil attends school for 100% of the school year.

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive a full-time education by regular attendance at a school or by other arrangements. It is a criminal offence for a parent to fail to ensure their child attends school regularly. In certain circumstances the Local Authority may prosecute parents/guardians in a Magistrates' Court where a 3-month imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2500. Alternatively, the Local Authority could issue a penalty notice which carries a fine of up to £120 per parent/carer, per child. Parents will be given every opportunity to improve their child's attendance and written warnings will be issued before any legal action is taken. The school will be guided by Local Authority procedures.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session, as either authorised or unauthorised. Therefore information about the cause of each absence is always required in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness of the pupil or other cause which the school accepts as reasonable. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a present mark.

## AIM

- To raise levels of achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in the school.
- To address the Every Child Matters Agenda.

## OBJECTIVES

The aims of this policy are:

- To improve the overall percentage of pupil attendance at school.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.
- To set out agreed roles and responsibilities and promote consistency.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students.
- To use a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data.
- To maintain positive and consistent communications between home and school.

- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Officer, the Education, Performance & Inclusion Team (EPI) and the other services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning re-integration following significant periods of absence.

#### ALL STAFF

- To make students aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- To be a good role model by being punctual to all registrations, lessons, clubs etc.

#### TUTOR

- To give attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- To implement the system for registration.
- To monitor for patterns of absence and share issues with the Head of Year.
- To be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
- Encourage and promote good attendance.

#### HEAD OF YEAR

- To give attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- To ensure 100% attendance is recognised and rewarded.
- To support and monitor the work for the Tutors and agree plans of action when necessary.
- To meet with parents to discuss unauthorised absence, and to liaise with Tutors.
- To ensure that the EWO is made aware of all attendance issues (either directly or via the Assistant Head).
- To organise the provision of work for all excluded pupils and long term absentees.
- To provide work for authorised absence only.
- To work with the Re-integration Service to create individual packages and reintegration plans.
- To regularly put attendance on agenda of Year meetings.
- To follow up truancy and those pupils who arrive late to school on a consistent basis, with appropriate punishments.
- Monitor attendance, including lesson attendance so that absconding is followed up and dealt with.
- Work with identified Persistent Absentee students to complete an attendance plan and communicate with parents.

#### ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

- To set annual attendance target with Headteacher.
- To support the work of the Heads of Year.
- To meet with the Education Welfare Officer, make referrals and monitor the outcomes.
- To oversee the general administration of the SIMS registration system.
- To ensure all staff new to the school are fully aware of the registration systems and attendance policy.
- To oversee lateness to school and to initiate appropriate action when necessary.
- To work with colleagues to identify causes of non-attendance.
- To give attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- To assist in production of termly attendance return.
- To organise awarding of annual Carbon Creative Attendance Awards.

- To monitor the performance of the Education Welfare Officer and advise the Headteacher accordingly.
- Report trends to the Governors' Student Welfare Committee.
- Keep attendance policy under review to reflect Local Authority guidance.

### SUBJECT TEACHERS

- To register all classes (and ensure that the students know that a register is taken).
- To follow up any suspected internal truancy by informing the Head of Year and Head of Department.
- To monitor progress of poor attendance and how it relates to their progress.

### SMT

- To promote high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- To oversee the work of all of the above.

### STUDENTS

- To arrive at school by 8.40am.
- To report to reception if late to school, sign in and collect late slip.
- To ensure parents provide a note when appropriate.
- To move purposefully between lessons, arriving punctually at all times.
- To sign in and out at the school office when necessary.
- To complete work set by the school during an authorised absence.

### PARENTS

- To ensure their children attend school regularly.
- To ensure son/daughter leaves for school on time.
- To inform the school of the reason for absence on the first day if at all possible by 11.00am.
- To always provide an explanation for absence (wherever possible at start of first day and then to keep the school informed throughout the absence on each subsequent day).
- Not to take holidays in term time (if this is unavoidable to apply to the Headteacher, providing full information giving reasons of any exceptional circumstances).
- To endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible, and to provide evidence of appointment cards for matters which will affect attendance.
- To work with the school to resolve any problems concerning unauthorised absence.
- To provide medical evidence when requested by the school.

### EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

- Liaise with Assistant Headteacher, Attendance officer and/or Heads of Year on a weekly basis.
- Liaise with home and school when a student's attendance is a concern.
- Work with referred students, and their parent(s)/carer(s), in order to improve attendance.
- Liaise with other agencies if required to improve an individual student's attendance.
- Implement legal proceedings if appropriate.
- Advise the school about Local Authority protocol relating to attendance.

### ATTENDANCE OFFICER

- To administer SIMS registration system.
- To monitor student attendance and liaise with Heads of Year and tutors.

- To update registers for students arriving late to school.
- To complete the daily Absent Pupils Messages/Lates forms.
- To produce individual student attendance record sheets as needed.
- To assist liaison with Education Welfare Officer on a weekly basis.
- To provide Headteacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Headteachers, and Heads of Year with Education Welfare Officer sheets.
- To attend Attendance Officer Meetings.
- To initiate first-day absence telephone calls.
- To complete termly attendance returns.
- Organise the issuing of Fixed Penalty Warning letters for all unauthorised leave of absence.

#### GOVERNORS

- To review the Attendance policy.
- To monitor its implementation.
- To monitor annual attendance figures.
- To publish attendance figures in the Governors' Annual Report to parents.