



## ATTENDANCE and TRUANCY

Whilst data from all previous attendance audits points to a 0% truancy rate historically, the School believes it important to consider all aspects of attendance and truancy factors and embed good practice should the need arise.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2005
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Advice on School Attendance (DfE)
- Improving Attendance at School (DfE)

We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

We expect all school personnel to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school. School personnel have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We are a school linked closely to an active RAF base. We always give allowances, within reason, for children of a pre-deployed or deployed parent/s.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

We believe truancy is a matter that we treat very seriously, as we feel pupils are not only losing valuable learning time but they are putting themselves at serious risk, as the school and their parents are not aware of their whereabouts.

Parents have a duty to ensure their children are well-behaved and attend school regularly, as 'good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects'. A Behaviour Policy is in place where parents and pupils sign on admission to the school.

We believe it is essential to have a strong working relationship with the Education Welfare Service, which provides support for pupils and their families in order to promote good pupil attendance and to reduce truancy.

We are aware that leave of absence can only be granted to a pupil only in exceptional circumstances and in authorising a holiday in term time we will take into account the child's attendance record, the child's age, the reason for the trip, the time in the academic year and the employment difficulties that parents face by taking holidays in school holiday time.

We will exercise a consistent approach and ensure equity for all pupils.

We will achieve this by having in place a home-school agreement that all parents have signed up to and by improving pupil attendance and truancy.

We acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We, as a school community, have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To have in place procedures to prevent truancy.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy
- To reward pupils by awarding them a certificate at the end of the year for 100% attendance

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The Principal will:

- delegate powers and responsibilities to the Headmaster to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy;
- promote the importance of attendance and punctuality with all stakeholders;

- ensure compliance with all statutory pupil registration regulations;
- ensure that the School Secretaries identify and follow up all absence and lateness;
- ensure that the attendance policy is carried out;
- ensure that discretionary powers are used to authorise absence in extenuating circumstances for up to 10 days in an academic year between September and July which may include term time holidays;
- ensure that absence is not authorised if it is to the detriment of a child's education;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- Responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.
- work with the SMT to develop this policy;
- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- create a culture which encourages attendance;
- address all school based causes of poor attendance such as bullying, racism etc.;
- undertake the daily monitoring of school attendance
- ensure registration is taken at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session;
- ensure school personnel are fully trained in the registration process and with the appropriate categorisation of absence;
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day;
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals, special educational needs and persistent absentees;
- monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning;
- ensure early intervention in order to prevent absenteeism or truancy and to put in to effect a range of procedures to deal with this problem;
- annually send to parents a detailed attendance report on their child;
- Target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders; intervention meetings.
- agenda attendance and truancy at periodic meetings with school personnel;
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence by telephone;
- question any parental explanation for pupil absence if there is doubt as to the validity of the explanation;
- expect an explanation for every absence and if one is not forthcoming then the absence will be categorised as unauthorised;
- report to the SMT every term attendance figures and progress to achieving set targets;
- remind parents of their commitment to this policy;
- meet with parents if they have applied for a holiday during school time;
- ensure school personnel are aware that unauthorised absence is absence without approval and includes all unexplained absences;
- when considering an application for term time holiday request will consider the:
  - *time of year of the proposed trip*
  - *length and purpose of the holiday*
  - *impact on continuity of learning*
  - *circumstances of the family (pre-deployed or deployed parents)*
  - *overall attendance of the child*
  - *restrictions on holiday time due to the nature of the parents' employment*
- apply a consistent approach across the school and ensure equality for all pupils;
- promote the importance of attendance during collective worship;
- publicise good attendance during assemblies, newsletters.

- award good attendance certificates to pupils when they have achieved 100% attendance;
- organise home tuition with the local support services for pupils with long term illness provided they are well enough to undertake the work;
- adopt procedures for reintegrating long-term absentees;
- organise training for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance;
- improve teaching in order to improve pupil engagement;
- work closely with the Principal and School Secretaries;
- strengthen links with external agencies who engage with and support families;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff especially on bullying and the needs of vulnerable groups;
- Annually report to the Principal on the success and development of this policy.
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
  - *monitoring trends and patterns as highlighted in attendance data*
  - *achieving results above the national average*
  - *looking at results from parent, pupil and school personnel questionnaires*

## **ROLE OF THE OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS**

The Office Administrators are responsible for:

- implementing the policy with the Principal;
- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 10.00a.m;
- sending a letter or email if no contact is made;
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made;
- contacting the key worker if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence;
- monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis;
- keeping the Principal informed of attendance figures and trends;
- contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance;
- organising meetings between the Principal and parents to discuss their child's poor attendance;
- Organising meetings between the Principal and parents to discuss their application for a term time holiday.
- compiling attendance data reports for the Principal.
- Ensuring registers are distributed to the teaching staff and are kept up to date.

## **ROLE OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

School personnel will:

- comply with and implement this policy;
- be aware of all other linked policies;
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance;
- ensure registration is taken at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session;
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day;
- ensure registers are up to date;
- be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns;
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy;
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents;
- Discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations.

## ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents/carers will:

- comply with this policy;
- work as partners with the school in the education of their children;
- ensure their children of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education;
- ensure their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance;
- inform the school on the first day of absence;
- inform the school of any changes to their contact details;
- collect their children on time
- take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- avoid taking family holidays in term time;
- be aware that the Headmaster, when considering an application for a term time holiday request, will consider the:
  - *time of year of the proposed trip*
  - *length and purpose of the holiday*
  - *impact on continuity of learning*
  - *circumstances of the family e.g. deployed or pre-deployed*
  - *overall attendance of the child*
  - *Restrictions on taking holidays when school is closed due to the nature of the parents' employment.*
- be aware that where parents fail to seek permission for time off then the absence will be treated as unauthorised;
- be aware that it is not advisable to apply for a term time holiday during the following times of the year:
  - *the first six weeks of any academic year*
  - *during assessments week*
- be encouraged to take an active interest in their child's work and to take an active role in the life of the school by attending:
  - *parents and open evenings*
  - *parent-teacher consultations*
  - *class assemblies*
  - *school shows*
  - *fundraising and social events*
- encourage effort and achievement;
- encourage completion of homework and return it to school;
- provide the right conditions for homework to take place;
- expect their child to hand in homework on time;
- join the school in celebrating success of their child's learning;
- Supporting the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.

## **ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

The Local Authority may prosecute a parent for not ensuring their child attends school regularly or may issue or apply for:

- Penalty Notice
- Education Supervision Order
- Parenting Order
- School Attendance Order

## **ROLE OF PUPILS**

Pupils are responsible for:

- being aware of the school attendance and truancy policy;
- arriving at school on time
- knowing the value of good attendance;
- knowing the seriousness of truancy, attending classes during the school day and not playing truant;
- accepting sanctions if they are caught playing truant;
- returning to school after a period of illness;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school;
- liaise with the school council;
- Take part in questionnaires and surveys.

## **DEALING WITH TRENDS IN ATTENDANCE**

When there is a pattern of poor attendance then the following procedure will take place:

- Parents are invited to attend an informal meeting with the Principal to explain their child's repeated absence.
- Support will be given if there are underlying reasons for the absence.
- If not, then the situation will be monitored for improvement.

## **DEALING WITH LATENESS**

The office staff monitors lateness and inform:

- the Principal of patterns of lateness;
- parents of the school's concerns and arrange a meeting so that the problem can be addressed

## **DEALING WITH TRUANCY**

If a pupil is thought to be playing truant then the school will immediately inform:

- the police
- the parent/carer;

All truants will receive:

- sanctions;
- support;
- a programme of monitoring and support

The Police must be informed immediately if a pupil leaves school without prior permission.

## **ABSENCE**

**Holidays during term time** – parents are encouraged to take a family holiday not in term time. Leave of absence only allowed in exceptional circumstances. Parents are asked to complete a holiday form requesting permission to take their child on holiday. We ask them to give reasons why they are unable to take a holiday out of term time.

**Religious Observance** – a maximum of three days absence is allowed for religious observance.

**Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments** – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child's education.

## **RAISING AWARENESS OF THIS POLICY**

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Prospectus
- the school website
- the Staff Handbook
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters
- reports such annual report to parents and Headmaster reports to the Principal
- information displays in the main school entrance

## **TRAINING FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications
- receive training on this policy on induction which specifically covers:
  - *the importance of good attendance and punctuality*
  - *all aspects of this policy*
  - *the use and understanding of attendance codes*
  - *authorised and unauthorised attendance*
  - *looking at trends and patterns*
  - *bullying*
  - *the needs of vulnerable groups*

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

## **MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS POLICY**

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator and the Headmaster.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Principal for further discussion and endorsement.

**LINKED POLICIES**

- Admission and Attendance Registers
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour
- Home School Agreement
- Inclusion
- Outside Agencies
- Troubled and Vulnerable Children

<b>Principal:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2019

**REVIEW DATE: 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020** \_\_\_\_\_