ATTENDANCE POLICY
(Pupils)

Agreed by Staff ....March 2023

Approved by Governors ....March 2023

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Contents

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance. Full and regular attendance at school is crucial for a child's future life chances and establishes a positive work ethic early in life. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. Pupils will be expected to aim for 100% attendance but when absence is unavoidable, parents/carers will be required to inform the school at the earliest opportunity

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

> Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

> Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

> The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

The School Committee

The School Committee is responsible for:

> Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

> Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

> Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

> Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school

> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

- > Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- > Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- > Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- > Leading attendance across the school

- > Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- > Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- > Having an oversight of data analysis

- > Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- > Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- > Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Sharon Mullarkey and can be contacted via the school office on 01737 243678

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office at the beginning of the morning and afternoon teaching session.

School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- > Use the school reporting system on a day-to-day basis to ensure all absences are recorded on the school system

- > Bring to the attention of the head teacher or deputy head any child missing from education

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- > Make sure their child attends every day on time

- > Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- > Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- > Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- > Attend school every day on time

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once at the beginning of the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

> Present

> Attending an approved off-site educational activity

> Absent

> Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

> The original entry

> The amended entry

> The reason for the amendment

> The date on which the amendment was made

> The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

> For pupils of compulsory school age Whether the absence is authorised or not

> The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

> The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parent/carers will complete a leave of absence form to record this absence.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed children will be marked as arriving after closure

> Repeated late arrival will be monitored by office staff and brought to the attention of the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, who will liaise with the class teacher to arrange for them to have a discussion with the parent/carer

> Class teacher will keep the designated senior leader informed. If necessary, the designated leader or a member of the senior leadership team will work with the family to improve punctuality.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

> Call or/and email the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason

> If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts by 10am, the headteacher will be notified. The headteacher will carry out a home visit with another member of staff before 12.30pm

> If contact has not been made with parent/carer following a home visit, the headteacher will inform the police of missing child

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents will receive a termly report.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Legal sanctions

The local authority monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. Where necessary, the inclusion officer will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence. If attendance problems cannot be resolved by the school then the inclusion officer may work with the school and parent/carer to improve attendance. The inclusion officer can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution or consider an Education Supervision Order.

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

> The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
> One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
> Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

> Monitor attendance and absence data across the school and at an individual pupil level
> Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
> Share attendance data with governors and the GMAT central team

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

> Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
> Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

> Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

> Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
> Make phone calls to parents to discuss their child's attendance
> Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
> Where appropriate, work with parents to create an attendance plan to support appropriate school attendance
> Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
> Make reasonable adjustments to provision and timetables to support attendance
> Keep parents/carers informed of any progress made

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

> Child protection and safeguarding policy

> Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day