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## ATTENDANCE POLICY

## Principles

- Regular and full time attendance is essential if children and young people are to benefit fully from their school life
- It is the parents responsibility to contact the school on the first day of an absence
- The school and parents should work together in order to achieve high standards of attendance and punctuality

## Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to

- set out the ways by which attendance is managed by the school
- clarify the role of the parents/carers

## The School will:

- give attendance high priority
- provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and their presence is valued
- raise awareness of the importance of full attendance using newsletters and other communications to parents
- encourage parents to fully support the policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education
- encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance so that they can retain this into adult life
- ensure that attendance is effectively monitored and absences are followed up promptly
- communicate effectively with other agencies as appropriate (eg EWS)
- meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence
- ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence
- ensure information is available for Governors and parents
- develop incentives for good attendance
- have procedures in place to help children settle in after a long absence

## Strategies to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Attendance

- All new parents are introduced to the Policy and information on attendance in the School Prospectus
- The newsletter is used as a vehicle to promote this aspect of school life and serves as a reminder

- Individual parents are approached where there is concern about their child's attendance
- Attendance certificates to reward children for high attendance

We expect the parent to:

- provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- notify the school when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of the absence
- telephone the school after the first day of absence to advise the school if the absence is continuing
- in cases of lengthy absence, keep the school well informed so that work can be sent home in certain cases and in order for the school to be prepared for the child's return
- provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen
- provide a note when the child returns from an absence due to sickness. This should be on the first day of the child's return to school
- let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made
- understand the importance of good attendance and promote this with their child where appropriate

Registers

The method of maintaining the class registers is through SIMs Attendance Module. Class teachers complete an OMR sheet twice daily and return it to the office.

Weekly absence reports are printed and reasons for absence recorded using the relevant codes.

B	:	educated offsite
M	:	sickness; medical or dental appointments
L	:	late before registers closed
@	:	late after registers closed (with reasons)
C	:	other authorised circumstances (exceptional)
H	:	annual family holiday
N	:	no reason yet provided for absence
V	:	school journey
R	:	religious activities
E	:	exclusion
T	:	temporary absence
!	:	Not required on roll

Registers close at 9.15 a.m. Lateness after this time is classed as unauthorised absence unless it is for a medical appointment or a reason is provided which can be authorised by the Headteacher.

### Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absences can be authorised if they are for certain reasons e.g. sickness, religious observance, approved holiday, absence following the death of a close member of the family.

The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

An absence will be classified as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- The child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat
- A child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child is more than half an hour late without a satisfactory explanation

Each child's unauthorised absences (including unauthorised holiday absences) will be noted and recorded in the School Profile.

It is a legal requirement for a school to include percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences in the School Profile.

Parents have a responsibility to telephone the school if their child is ill. If a child needs to be absent for a medical appointment a note must be received by the class teacher before the appointment. When a child returns from a period of absence due to a sickness, a note must be provided. The class teacher dates and signs all notes in order to complete the weekly absence report.

The school will telephone the child's home to enquire about an absence if the parent has not contacted the school on the first day of absence.

If a child has been absent for 3 days without an explanation, parents will be sent a letter. If no satisfactory response is received, a follow up reminder will be sent. Should this still result in a nil response, the Headteacher will write informing the parent of the Policy and

the school's duty to inform the Education Welfare Officer about the child's lack of attendance.

Where there is cause for concern, i.e. when attendance is below 80% in any term, the reasons for this will be investigated and where appropriate, discussed with the EWO during one of their regular visits.

### Holidays

Parents are asked to avoid taking their children away on holiday during term time if at all possible.

If this cannot be avoided, the appropriate form may be obtained from the school office. Upon receipt of this form, which must be completed well before the holiday commences, up to ten days may be authorised for the event of an annual family holiday. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher and may not always be granted. The reasons must be made clear to the Headteacher in the relevant section. Parents are asked to reflect on the affect that this time out of school will have on their child's learning when requesting such authorisation. Parents have no right to demand that absences are authorised. (Regulation 8 of the Education Regulations 1995 applies).

The holiday must be to accompany parents and must be for the annual family holiday and not a second or subsequent holiday. It should not be used for odd half days and is not an entitlement to a cumulative total of 10 days holidays on separate occasions.

If a pupil goes on holiday without permission from the Headteacher, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the EWS will be informed.

All other requests for absences due to other circumstances must be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance.

### Medical Appointments

Parents must sign their child(ren) out and back in again when attending appointments during the school day.

If a child has an appointment in a morning or afternoon session and does not attend school for the other session, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless it has been agreed with the Headteacher.

### Monitoring

The Headteacher will keep the Governors informed about attendance matters.

All staff will be expected to comply with the policy and any issues will be discussed at staff meetings.

The EWO visits school each half term and if necessary will discuss concerns and review absence data with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher may also contact the EWO at other times if he has concerns regarding a pupils welfare or attendance.

#### Attendance Targets

Authorised Absence :	6%	Attendance :	94%
Unauthorised Absence :	1%	Attendance :	99%

*Penny to add latest figures*

Reviewed April 2008