



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### Our Values

We believe that regular school attendance is essential to the all-round educational development and wellbeing of a child. We promote good school attendance by giving it a high profile in school. We encourage parents/carers to build positive relationships with all staff and bring children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 into the classroom every day. Children in Year 2 are welcomed by staff each day on the door with an opportunity for parents to discuss any issues. We open early and offer drop zone and after school child care services. We aim to establish good communication with parents and carers by providing a friendly, open and happy environment.

### Teaching Approaches and Ethos

We will encourage good attendance and punctuality by:

- Personal example.
- Sending home termly attendance reports using a highly visible (red, amber, green) paper code that indicates to all parents (including EAL/SEN) how their child is performing compared to national expectations.
- Rewarding students with 100% attendance with a certificate of recognition.
- Providing weekly rewards for the class with the highest % attendance (Seals) that week.
- Having a strict policy that no holidays are to be taken in term time.
- Ensuring valid reasons for absence are provided by parents and carers.
- Promoting the importance of attendance in policies, prospectus and regularly in newsletters.
- Having clear systems at individual, class and whole school levels. Which revolves around early intervention, good communication and positive relationships.
- Reporting and publishing attendance rates to parents and LA.
- The implementation of a rigorous monitoring system and regular scrutiny of attendance reports.
- Upholding our values of non-discrimination on the basis of race equality, disability, accessibility and inclusion.
- Taking direct action to improve poor attendance using phone calls, text messaging, home visits and formal multi-agency meetings to support families in improving attendance rates.
- The use of attendance intervention programmes for pupils with low attendance.

## Roles and Responsibilities

- Parents/carers must give reasons for all absences as soon as possible on the first day of absence and keep in regular contact if the absence is for more than one day. Leave of absence requests must be submitted to the Head teacher using the yellow form available at the office. **Absences will only be authorised for exceptional circumstances or health/medical issues.**
- All school staff are responsible for checking and reporting absences to the school office / administrator.
- School Administrative staff will check on unexplained absences daily by either talking to staff or contacting parents via phone, text or email. They will produce monitoring reports for the Headteacher, governors and other authorised professionals on request.
- Governors will monitor the numbers from each termly attendance reports sent to parents (using red paper to illustrate attendance below 90%, yellow paper 90 – 94%, green above 95%).
- Headteacher will ensure that termly monitoring of attendance is undertaken and that children with persistent absences are monitored on a more frequent basis to ensure their attendance improves. The Headteacher will discuss attendance issues with parents and on occasions with other professionals involved with families. If attendance is raised as a concern, the school will work in partnership with families to improve attendance. This may involve working with other agencies such as the School Nurse and Children’s Services.
- The Headteacher/ Office Administrator will inform the LA (person responsible for children missing education) if any child leaves the school without a confirmed forwarding school or if a child is absent for a sustained period eg: returning to home / country of origin.
- The LA will be informed if non-attendance is a persistent problem and steps will be taken by the school in partnership with the LA which may ultimately include fixed penalty notices or other legal action.

## Systems and Procedures

### Registration

- Doors open at 8:50 am - Registers are taken at 9.00 a.m. and after lunch break daily.
- If a child arrives after the external doors have been closed at 9am the parent should report to the school reception and sign the child in, stating the time of arrival.
- If a child is not present and no reason is known for the absence, a ‘N’ will be entered in the register, until a reason is established.
- If the reason for the absence is known, then the appropriate symbol will be entered.
- If no reason is given by the parent, then an “O” will be entered.
- The Office /Administrative staff will chase up unexplained absences through telephone/text/email and record those contacts on Scholarpack. Where necessary any unexplained absences will be investigated further following the **First Day Absence Procedure.**

### **First Day Absence (where there has been no parent/carer contact)**

- Absences are recorded on our system (ScholarPack) at the start of the day
- If there has been no contact from a parent/carer, a phone call will be made to the first contact on our records to check on the child
- Further telephone calls will be made and followed up by a text message and/or email to the first contact
- If by no contact has been received/made with the parent/carer, we will then go through the other contacts on our system to ascertain the reason for absence and ensure that the child is safe and well
- If by 10am, there has still been no contact with the family to explain the reason for absence, we may then make a home visit or request the police make a welfare visit

### **Positive Praise and Rewards**

- Our Attendance Seals are presented weekly to the class with the highest attendance %. The class with the highest annual attendance is celebrated on the Newsletter along with any children with 100% attendance who receive a certificate and medal.
- Birthdays are celebrated in school.
- Staff welcome parents into the classrooms regularly to talk to them about their children.
- Green/Amber/Red attendance reports are issued termly.
- Individual Attendance Programmes (Attendance Charts) are in place for pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding.

### **Induction to the Reception Year**

- Children attend on a part-time basis initially, either morning or afternoon over a short period, gradually building up to staying for lunch and then full-time.
- Parents are supported in establishing regular attendance from the beginning including children in our Nursery.

### **Authorised Absences**

Absence will be authorised for:

- Sickness (including COVID)
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances
- Obtaining/renewal of passports and travel documentation where children must be present
- Unable to attend school due to adverse weather conditions preventing access.

## **Unauthorised Absences**

Absence will not be authorised for

- Holidays
- Shopping
- Birthdays or similar events
- Illness of parent, unless in exceptional circumstances.

### **Requesting a Leave of Absence – *May only be authorised in special circumstances!***

The Head teacher is only allowed to authorise up to 10 such days in any 12 months. Parents should apply on the appropriate form to the school for permission in advance preferably (6 weeks prior).

The Head teacher will meet with parents (if needed) in order to make a decision about whether to authorise the absence or not. This decision will be provided in writing by the Office Administrator.

Parents should provide the Head teacher with evidence/information to support the special circumstances associated with the absence request.

Cost or convenience relating to holidays, are **not** valid reasons.

Special circumstances may include:

- One off family celebrations such as weddings and funerals.

If there are no special circumstances or parents fail to attend the meeting or provide the necessary proof, the holiday absence will be unauthorised.

The school is responsible for reporting poor attendance rates to the Local Authority who may decide in partnership with the school to issue a penalty notice to the family.

As a school we will strive at all costs to maintain good relationships with families agreeing to requests when it is appropriate. However, our prime concern is the education of the pupils in our care and absences from school are actively discouraged.

Staff requesting a leave of absence for unique/special circumstances must do so in writing to the Chair of Governors.