



## **Policy on Attendance**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good through half termly attendance certificates. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

### **2 Definitions**

#### 2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

#### 2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

### **3 If a child is absent**

- 3.1 Parents and carers should inform the school by telephone of their child's absence as soon as possible, on the morning of the first day of the absence.
- 3.2 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, which will inform the school office. If the office has not already been informed of the reason for a child's absence, they will endeavour to contact a parent or carer by telephone.
- 3.3 When the child returns to school, parents or carers are encouraged to send a note to explain the absence.

- 3.4 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.5 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or carer, in order to check on the safety of the child.

#### **4 Requests for leave of absence**

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are exceptional circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child, e.g. a very special event or a family crisis. We expect parents and carers to contact the school and request the leave of absence on the official school form. The Headteacher will respond to the request as soon as possible
- 4.2 The Governing Body does not authorise any requests for family holidays during term time. Holidays taken without permission will be recorded as 'unauthorised absence'. Governors are sympathetic to the financial pressures on many families but feel that a child's education should be the priority at all times

#### **5 Long-term absence**

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

#### **6 Repeated unauthorised absences**

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA Educational Welfare Officer, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

#### **7 Lateness and punctuality**

- 7.1 Children are expected to arrive punctually, ready to line up on the playground at **8.45am**. The school gate is locked from 8.55am and any children arriving after this time must enter school through the main entrance and be 'signed in' by a parent/carer.
- 7.2 Registers close at **8.55** and children arriving after this time will be marked as 'Late' on the class register
- 7.3 Parents/Carers of children who are persistently late will be contacted by the Headteacher and will be asked to address the problem

#### **8 Rewards for good attendance**

- 8.1 All the children who have excellent attendance in any half term will receive a certificate. These are gold (100% attendance), silver (97- 99.9% attendance) and bronze (94-96.9% attendance). There are also special certificates for outstanding attendance (100%) for the whole school year. These are presented in our achievement assembly at the end of term.

- 8.2 The class with the highest weekly attendance will be awarded the 'Attendance Cup' in Friday's celebration assembly.

## **9 Attendance targets**

- 9.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are set by the governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

## **10 Monitoring and review**

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 10.2 The Headteacher will monitor attendance on a weekly basis to identify any children who are persistently absent or who continually arrive late. Parents will be informed by letter and will be expected to address this, otherwise the Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.
- 10.3 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 10.4 The rates of attendance will be reported in the School's Profile, and OFSTED will make a judgement about the school's attendance in their inspection report.
- 10.5 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Headteacher, who will contact the parents or carers.
- 10.6 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

**Signed:**

**Date:**