

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Attendance Co-ordinator: Gail Hickey

Education Welfare Officer: Gail Isherwood

Attendance Policy Group members: Curriculum committee

Name	Role	Responsibility
G Hamilton	Head teacher	To monitor the attendance throughout the school
G Hickey	Attendance coordinator	To monitor the attendance situation of individual children.
G Hickey	Attendance coordinator	To raise the level of attendance of those children identified as being at risk
G Hickey	Attendance coordinator	The welfare of children in school
T Nuttall	Chair of Governors	To keep a check on the general situation
Gail Isherwood	EWO	To support the school in achieving its objectives by following the Local Authority Guidelines.

Attendance Policy Statement:

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s), local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Aims:

- To improve the quality of school life
- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s)/carer(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive

Objectives:

- To involve the children more in their school attendance
- To improve communication with parent(s)/carer(s) about regular school attendance
- All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children's attendance.
- To recognise the important role of class teacher in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- To ensure time and organisation within the school to enable the aims and objectives to be met
- To maintain effective working relationships with Education Welfare Service, and report half-termly figures to the service

Targets:

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information.
- To ensure that such data is available and used effectively by school managers and staff in conjunction with the EWO.
- To discuss the settings of targets for the school with the Education Welfare Officer and the School Improvement partner.
- To agree specific targets for individuals, groups, years and the whole school in a context of all known relevant factors and ensure that these are communicated to all relevant parties.
- To keep parent(s)/carer(s), pupils and governors informed of policy and practice
- To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for some vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children.

Parent(s)/carer(s) will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- When their children first start at our school
- Home school contracts
- Through newsletters
- At parent(s)/carer(s) evenings
- In the school brochure
- In the annual Governors' Report to Parent(s)/carer(s).

Children will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- In assemblies
- In the classroom
- During appropriate areas of the curriculum

Procedure:

- Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
 - - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
 - - Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)
- It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s) will provide an explanation if the child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, personally at the office or by appointment
- If contact, explaining the child's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s), then the school will contact the home by telephone/text on the initial day, following this with a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence. **This contact needs to be recorded in the register.**
- The head teacher regularly reminds parent(s)/carer(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Children with 100% attendance are rewarded by the school.

Identification & Referral:

- Identification is made by the class teacher (cause for concern)
- Concerns are communicated to the parent(s)/carer(s) by the class teacher.
- Person responsible (class teacher) will contact parent(s)/carer(s) with letter 1
- Following the letter, there will be four weeks' monitoring of the child's attendance
- If there is no improvement, at this point, attendance letter 2 may be sent and parent(s)/carer(s) can be invited in for a meeting
- Parents/carers may, after four weeks' monitoring, be informed that a referral to the Education Welfare Service will be made
- Parental duty to ensure full school attendance should be reinforced

- If attendance has improved over the last four weeks, monitoring of attendance may continue.
- At this point, a referral to the Education Welfare Service should be made, if attendance has not improved and a final warning letter may be appropriate at this point
- The referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s) and a print out of the child's attendance certificate.

Completing the Register:

- The twice-daily requirement to register pupils can and should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to receive children formally from home, and serve as an introduction to the session
- The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost
- However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school
- Registers are marked electronically and any alterations dated and explained.
- All absences should be accounted for and coded
- The register should be marked using the symbols advised by DCSF and Cheshire County Council.
- Due to the use of an electronic marking system, the Governing Body is responsible for registering with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998
- Electronic registers have to be printed out once a month and kept in the same way as manual registers. **These are legal documents**

Lateness:

School doors open at 8.50 and **all pupils are expected to be in school by 9.00 for registration. Registers close at 9.30.** Children are **late** if they arrive after 9.30. A record is kept of children who arrive between 9.00 and 9.30. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action will be taken.

Pupils returned to school by Truancy Patrols:

The school will have in place a procedure for pupils who are returned to school by a Truancy Patrol.

Family Holidays during term time:

Parent(s)/carer(s) are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. School holiday dates are published well in advance of each school year **Parent(s)/carer(s) do not have the right to take their child or young person out of school for such a holiday** and such an absence will be recorded as unauthorised except in exceptional circumstances. In all such cases a request for absence form should be completed. Any child who is absent for longer than 10 days after an agreed return date, can legally be removed from the school roll and may be liable to prosecution.

In considering whether or not a holiday absence can be authorised, the school will consider each case individually, taking into account a child's overall attendance, progress and any exceptional reasons for the holiday. The cost of holidays in school holidays is not considered an exceptional reason to take leave during term time. The school will not authorise holidays taken during any examination weeks.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice, which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. The school is aware and takes into account the need for all public authorities to re-examine and make any necessary changes to their practice in promoting genuine multi-racial partnership.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parent(s)/carer(s)/carers and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.

This review date for this policy is April 2020.

Chair of Governors: Mrs Tara Nuttall