



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

As a Federation we will take appropriate action when necessary in order to ensure full attendance for every child.

*“Children need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both Primary and Secondary school.”*

*updated 2/11/16)*

*DfE Guidance on School Attendance –*

### **DfE Guidance : SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (November 2016):**

Schools should:

1. Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
2. Ensure every child has access to full time education
3. Act early to address patterns of absence

Parents must perform their legal duty by ensuring children of compulsory school age who are registered to a school attend regularly and all pupils must be punctual to their lessons.

### THE LAW

- By law, all children of compulsory school age must have a proper full-time education. However if your child is under compulsory school age, by enrolling them in our school your agreement to follow our attendance expectations is implied.
- Parents are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering the child at a school or by making other arrangements that provide an effective education. Failure to do this could result in prosecution.
- If a child is registered as a pupil at a Wallisdean Federation school, their school must give permission for absence in exceptional circumstances and the education authority can take legal action against the parent(s) if the child does not attend or is late.
- Children should attend school regularly to ensure full access to the curriculum.

### AIMS

- To maximise attendance of all children.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Parent Support Admin Officer and multi-agency teams.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

- **Governors**
  - To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
  - To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

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- To monitor the impact of contracts.
- **Executive Head Teacher / Heads of School**
  - To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns.
  - To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
  - To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and / or punctuality is an issue.
  - To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
  - To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
  - To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- **Class Teacher**
  - To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
  - To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate recording sheet.
  - To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by Office Staff.
  - To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.
- **Admin Staff**
  - To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the SIMS Attendance Module.
  - To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary.
  - To contact parents/carers on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason.
  - To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
  - To make a judgement in conjunction with the Executive Head Teacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
  - The Admin Officer and Parent Support Worker to meet with the Executive Head Teacher and/or Head of School half termly.
- **Infant School Admin Officer / Junior School Admin Officer**
  - To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
  - To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.
  - To attend contract meetings with parents.
  - To attend attendance meetings with governors and parents.

### ADMINISTRATION

- The schools uses Attendance Manager provided by SIMS to store and monitor our legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.
- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning session (8.45am in the Junior School, 8.55am in the Infant School) and the afternoon session (1.15pm). Registers are returned to the school's Admin Office after the closure of the registration period.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately would leave the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

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## ABSENCE

### *Lateness*

The school day begins at 8.45am at the Junior School and 8.50am at the Infant School and all **pupils are expected to be in school at this time.**

- Morning registration in the Junior School is at 8.50am and it closes at 9.00am. Morning registration in the Infant School is at 8.55am and it closes at 9.05am.
- Junior School pupils arriving after 8.50am and up to 8.55am and Infant School pupils arriving after 8.55am and up to 9.05am, will be coded **L** (late) in the attendance register in line with Hampshire County Council and Department of Education guidance.
- Gates at the Junior School are locked at 8.50am. Doors at the Infant School are locked at 8.55 am. Any pupils arriving after these times must report to their school Office so that their attendance (and lunch order) may be recorded.
- Pupils arriving after 9.00am at the Junior School or after 9.05 am at the Infant School will be officially absent for the morning session. Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded **U** in line with Hampshire County Council and Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.
- Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality.
- 10 sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness will result in a penalty fine.

### *Illness*

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school by 9.15 am on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence.
- Where Admin Staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Head of School or Executive Head Teacher will be informed.

### *Medical or dental appointments*

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours, or as late in the school day as possible.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES:**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. Further amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to understand that head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining *exceptional* are; rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

***There is no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday.***

Applications to take leave of absence under exceptional circumstances during term time will be considered on an individual basis and should be applied for using the exceptional circumstances approved leave of absence form obtainable from the school office or school website.

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No application will be authorised where a child's absence is below 96.9%. If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised; if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire County Council's *Information on Penalty Notices for non-attendance at school Advice for Parents and carers 2015*, parents/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance with the code.

**Key Stage One** pupils undergo statutory tests and assessments during the Summer Term therefore no absences of leave will be authorised and it is strongly recommended that avoidable appointments/ time out of school are not scheduled during this period.

**Key Stage Two** pupils undergo Mock SATs in January and statutory SATs in May therefore no absences of leave will be authorised and it is strongly recommended that avoidable appointments/ time out of school are not scheduled during this period.

A school can change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

### FIXED PENALTIES

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 increased the amounts of penalty notices payable by parents from 1 September 2012.

These will apply to any parent who fails to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is registered at a state school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

A police constable, local authority officer, head teacher or assistant head teacher can issue penalty notices to parents in accordance with the local authority's code of conduct.

### OTHER ABSENCE

Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or un-authorise the absence.

### REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

All absences both authorised, unauthorised absence and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

### REWARDS – INFANT SCHOOL

- Children who achieve 100% attendance and no lates are presented with a certificate at the end of each term. Where 100% attendance is achieved over consecutive terms, the children will progress from Bronze certificate, onto Silver certificate, then Gold certificate. If a fourth consecutive term of 100% attendance is achieved, they will win an attendance medal along with a certificate. If a fifth consecutive term of 100% attendance is achieved, the children are rewarded with a mystery prize.
- The class with the highest attendance is rewarded each week with a Weekly Attendance Cup and earns a place on the ½ termly Attendance League poster.
- Each half term, the class at the top of the Attendance League wins the Governors' Attendance Cup and is rewarded with a non-school uniform day.

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## REWARDS – JUNIOR SCHOOL

- Children who achieve 100% attendance and no lates are presented with a certificate at the end of each term. Where 100% attendance is achieved over consecutive terms, the children will progress from Bronze certificate, onto Silver certificate, then Gold certificate. If a fourth consecutive term of 100% attendance is achieved, they will win an attendance medal along with a certificate. If a fifth consecutive term of 100% attendance is achieved, the children are rewarded with a mystery prize.
- The class with the highest attendance is rewarded each week with a Weekly Attendance Cup and earns a place on the termly Attendance League.
- At the end of each term, the class at the top of the Attendance League wins the Governors' Attendance Cup and is rewarded with an extra playtime.

## ATTENDANCE CODES

National Attendance codes are used in line with DfE requirements.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Attendance data will be collected monthly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with: incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of un-authorised; and all children with attendance below 90%. This data will be discussed with the PSAO as part of the regular half-termly meetings.
- On a half-termly basis, the attendance data is reviewed and where attendance has fallen below 90%, a letter is sent home along with an offer of school support and development of an agreed contact as necessary. **See Attendance Action Chart attached.**
- The Head of School/Executive Head Teacher and PSW/AO will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Executive Head Teacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governors.
- The Governors will set and review an annual target of attendance.

Autumn 2018

Ratified by FGB: 5/2/18