Attendance and Absence Policy & Procedure

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Date of first implementation: January 2014

Date of last review: August 2020

Date of next review: August 2021

This policy and procedure document links with and is supported by the following other policy and procedure document:

- Conduct Policy & Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
- Teaching and Learning Policy

PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

It is widely acknowledged that attendance has a direct impact upon achievement, success and welfare. Strong evidence shows that where any individual pupils' attendance percentage is below 96% it will have a detrimental effect on their achievement, becoming increasingly damaging as their attendance percentage becomes lower. It can also impact upon welfare and standards of conduct, where a pupil's low attendance leads to them falling behind in their learning and subsequently to further disengaging from learning when in school. Non-attendance is one of the single biggest blocks to achievement and the school carrying out its function in safeguarding the welfare of children. Whether absence is due to term-time holidays, dubious illnesses or truancy, not being present at school disadvantages children.

Therefore, there is a moral imperative to focus on persistent absentees, because this is a group of young people who are unlikely to attain well at school, unlikely to stay on in education after the age of 16, and significantly more likely to engage in self-harming activities and anti-social behaviour. By focusing on good attendance we can make a significant impact across the range of outcomes for pupils.

The promotion of a strong triangular relationship between the pupils, their homes and the school, and involving partner agencies, is important in reducing persistent absenteeism. Offering our pupils an exciting curriculum and ensuring that school is a safe and enjoyable place are equally important aspects. In this way we hope that the school environment and ethos will foster a coherent and effective approach to tackling the problem of persistent absenteeism.

AIMS

- To create a culture in which high attendance is normality.
- To ensure students, parents/carers and all staff recognise the link between good attendance, academic qualifications gained and exceeding individual potential.
- To recognise and reward good attendance.
- To provide and communicate a clear framework of expectations that is accepted by parents, students, all staff and governors.

OBJECTIVES

- To adopt new and update current attendance procedures to ensure earlier and more effective intervention.
- To encourage all staff to take responsibility for attendance.

TARGETS

- To improve the overall school attendance figure to 96% by the end of the 2020/21 academic year.
- To lower persistent absenteeism.
- To further improve communication with students and parents regarding attendance.

REGISTERING ATTENDANCE

This is the responsibility of the classroom teacher and the following procedures must be followed.

STATUTORY REGISTRATION (INCLUDING MORNING AND AFTERNOON REGISTRATION)

- Registers are to be marked using SIMS within 10 minutes of the start of each period.
- Pupils present should be given a "/" (am) and "\" (pm) mark (present for that session).
- Pupils not present in the lesson should be marked with an "N" (No reason yet supplied for absence).
- Pupils who arrive late should be given an "L" mark and the number of minutes late recorded using the SIMs comment system.
- Paper registers should only be marked when there is no possible alternative (e.g. for cover lessons) and these should be returned promptly to the Main School Office unless another arrangement has been made.

TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesdays & Fridays				Thursdays Only			
Start	Finish	Time	Scheduled Activity	Start	Finish	Time	Scheduled Activity
08:35	08:45	0:10	In Tutor Rooms	08:35	08:45	0:10	In Tutor Rooms
08:45	09:05	0:20	Form Time	08:45	09:05	0:20	Form Time
09:05	10:05	1:00	Period 1	09:05	10:05	1:00	Period 1
10:05	11:05	1:00	Period 2	10:05	11:05	1:00	Period 2
11:05	11:25	0:20	Break Time	11:05	11:30	0:25	Break Time
11:25	12:25	1:00	Period 3	11:30	12:30	1:00	Period 3
12:25	13:25	1:00	Period 4	12:30	13:00	0:30	Lunch Time
13:25	14:00	0:35	Lunch Time	13:00	14:00	1:00	Period 4
14:00	15:00	1:00	Period 5				

- Any students that are on school site **before 08:35** are to go to the Main Hall and Refectory where you will be asked to wait in year group bubbles.
- Any students that are on school site between **08:35-08:45** are to go straight to their Tutor Rooms, where Form Tutors will meet them.
- The school day **starts at 08:45** and students should be in their Tutor Rooms by that time. Any students that arrive after that time are considered to be "Late to School", as per the Attendance Policy.

PUPILS WHO ARRIVE LATE TO SCHOOL

- Morning registration begins promptly at 8:45 each morning. Students who arrive in form after this 8:45 will be coded as an "L" and issued a late (breaktime) detention.
- Any student who arrives onto the school site after 8:45 but before 9:15 will be registered at reception as an "L" code and will be issued a late (breaktime) detention.
- Any student who arrives onto the school site after 9:15 will be marked as a "U" (unauthorised) code. Accumulation of "U" codes may lead to the issuing of a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.
- Pupils who arrive substantially late to lessons (i.e. 5 minutes) without good reason are deemed to be presenting negative conduct that is detrimental to learning and should be issued a "C1 – Late to Lesson".

PUPILS OF NON-STATUTORY SCHOOL AGE

- It has been agreed that the above procedures will be adopted for registration across the school.

DEALING WITH ABSENCE

AUTHORISED ABSENCES

- These are sessions away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical appointments or compassionate reasons. It should be noted that the school hold to right to refuse the authorisation of absence in the case of excessive days being taken off ill. In this case we may request evidence in the form of appointment cards, consultant letters and copies of prescriptions etc.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- These are sessions away from school where there is no good reason offered or where leave of absence has not been approved.
- Unauthorised absences will be coded as a "U" or an "O". Accumulation of ten or more unauthorised sessions may lead to the issuing of a Penalty Notice Warning from the Local Authority. This will result in a monitoring window which will run over 15 school days.
- Failure of the monitoring period will result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority. The penalty notice is issued individually to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. The penalty is £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of the Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If proved guilty, the parent/carer will receive a criminal record.

RECORDING AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- This is the responsibility of the School Attendance Officer.
- Absences can be authorised by the School Attendance Officer using the appropriate statutory codes. It should be noted that the school hold to right to refuse the authorisation of absence in the case of excessive days being taken off ill. In this case we may request evidence in the form of appointment cards, consultant letters and copies of prescriptions etc.
- Absence due to illness requires either a telephone call or email from a parent/carer before the close of morning registration at 9:15.
- Compassionate leave should be requested in writing by the parent/carer. Authorisation of this attendance is at the discretion of the school.
- Where possible, all absences for statutory registration periods should be cleared by the end of the day or if this is not practicable at the very least by the end of the week in which the absence has occurred with any "N" marks being replaced by the appropriate statutory code.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- In line with the 2013 amendments to the School Attendance Order Education Act 1996, "Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence (holiday) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances". Therefore, leaves of absence taken during term time will be unauthorised, unless the Head Teacher chooses to authorise them in exceptional circumstances, on application by letter from the parent/carer in advance of the leave. For further details, please see the Cheshire East guide to "Taking children on holiday during term time" – http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/taking-children-on-holiday-during-term-time.pdf

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

- Monitoring of pupils' attendance and initial intervention through communication with parents is responsibility of the Form Tutor, supported by year team leaders and the School Attendance Officer.
- A central log of attendance interventions will be held by the School Attendance Officer (CPOMS where applicable).
- Early and structured interventions in the form of telephone calls, emails, letters, meetings, home visits, Fixed Penalty Warnings and Notices and targeted case work will be put in place to improve student attendance.
- For the purpose of attendance monitoring and action, any figure below 96% is considered as "poor attendance", persistent absence as defined by the government is below 90%.
- Concerns about a pupil's attendance should be discussed at the year team fortnightly meeting, and filtered to form tutors where applicable.
- Should any student not attend for an extended period of consecutive days their parents/guardians will have a meeting arranged in school in order to plan for the continuation of learning and return to school.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

- The member of the Senior Leadership Team that has been delegated the overall responsibility of managing attendance is the Deputy Headteacher – Raising Standards, working with the Assistant Headteacher (behaviour & attendance).
- It is essential that the Senior Leadership Team keep a watching brief over attendance as good attendance plays such an important part in ensuring the continued success of all pupils.

REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE

- Rewarding positive conduct is an important part of encouraging self-esteem, safety & wellbeing and pride and therefore should be applied to encouraging good attendance.
- Pupils will receive house points in accordance with the school's rewards system on a half-termly basis.
- Pupils who have improved attendance can receive a token for a hot chocolate or a chocolate bar.
- Pupils with 100% attendance for a full term will receive a certificate, presented in year assembly.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about school attendance and absence can be found on the school and Cheshire East websites:

https://www/cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/school-attendance/attendance-and-children-out-of-education.aspx