

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

January 2016

Policy Statement

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. Sharrow School is committed to working with parents / carers and pupils to ensure that each pupil benefits from the academic, personal and social opportunities available to them during their years with us.

The young child, however, is dependent upon the adults in his / her life to get them to school regularly and on time. So the focus in both Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 programmes is to establish good habits and work with parent/ carers to improve attendance. In Key Stage 2 we continue to work with parent/ carers and start to develop 'self' responsibility in the children.

We are, therefore, committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parent / carers.

Aims of the Policy

- ❖ Clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by maintaining good attendance and punctuality.
- ❖ Ensuring parent / carers and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- ❖ Ensuring all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and governors understand the procedures.
- ❖ The commitment to allocate resources to support the policy.
- ❖ Addressing attendance and inclusion issues in the curriculum.

The Law

The 1996 Education Act requires that:

- ❖ All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- ❖ The CYPD must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- ❖ The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- ❖ The school must report to CYPD pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than ten days without explanation.
- ❖ The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.

- ❖ Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

Partnership

What the school expects of our pupils

- ❖ That pupils attend regularly, on time and ready to learn.
- ❖ That pupils are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment eg PE kit.
- ❖ To report to the office should they arrive after registration time.
- ❖ To tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school.

What the school expects of parents / carers

- ❖ To fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day.
- ❖ To contact school on the first day their child is absent for any reason.
- ❖ To arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible, and to obtain an Authorised Absence Pass from the school if unavoidable.
- ❖ To arrange holidays out of school time .
- ❖ To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school.

What parents / carers and pupils can expect from the school

- ❖ A broad, balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- ❖ Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school, and regular encouragement.
- ❖ Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance.
- ❖ First day contact with parents / carers when absence is unexplained.
- ❖ Prompt action when a problem has been identified.
- ❖ Liaison with the local Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) to assist and support families where needed.
- ❖ Regular communication with parents / carers.

Procedures

Registers are a legal document. Great care must be taken to ensure registers are marked accurately either on the computer or, in ink, on a paper copy. Attendance of all pupils is monitored and evaluated regularly using the following procedures.

Registration

- ❖ Registration takes place each morning at 8.50 am and at the start of each afternoon.
- ❖ Class teachers use SIMS attendance on the computer to complete the registers.
- ❖ Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) in the register for each pupil present and an absent mark (N) for any pupil that is absent.
- ❖ If a child is absent with no reason a member of staff will contact the family on the day to enquire why the child is not at school and encourage the child to return to school as soon as possible - same day if appropriate.

Responding to lateness

- ❖ Pupils arriving in the classroom after registers have been completed on the computer are deemed to be late.
- ❖ Pupils arriving late must report to the school office where their N mark is amended to L and their name and reason for lateness recorded in the Lates Book.
- ❖ All pupils reporting late at the office will be given a green card which must be shown to the class teacher as evidence that they have signed into school
- ❖ Parents / carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.

Responding to absence - criteria for referral to the Local MAST.

- ❖ Home / school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance.
- ❖ Patterns of absence.
- ❖ Poor overall attendance (eg below 90%).
- ❖ Each half term a review of individual pupil attendance takes place. Any pupil showing an attendance of below 90% for the last half term is discussed and, if appropriate, a referral form is completed by the school and passed to the MAST.
- ❖ If attendance continues to give cause for concern strategies will be considered and steps taken in an attempt to improve attendance and

punctuality. This could include working with members of staff, the MAST or other professionals if deemed appropriate.

Children Missing from Education

School staff liaise with the Children and Young People's Directorate Children Missing from Education Team. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures .

Children in Public Care

The Headteacher is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Children and Young People's Directorate Looked After Children Team. Their individual attendance will be checked each half term.

Partnership with Parents / Carers

It is vital that parents / carers are involved in promoting good attendance and punctuality.

- ❖ Regular attendance information is given to parents / carers eg by newsletter, individual letter, parent evenings. When attendance is of serious concern contact may be made by the MAST.
- ❖ Parents / carers are encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance or punctuality.
- ❖ Any concerns or problems raised by parents / carers will be responded to quickly and sensitively by the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- ❖ Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Headteacher and the CYPD via the Headteacher report.

Headteacher

- ❖ Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school.
- ❖ Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues.
- ❖ Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education.

Class Teachers

- ❖ Accurately mark in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- ❖ Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a pupil.
- ❖ Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school.

Office Staff

- ❖ Maintain accurate class registers in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- ❖ Receive phone calls and messages from parents/carers reporting pupil absences.
- ❖ Update the registers in SIMS with the appropriate codes for absence or lateness.
- ❖ Compile daily list of absentees and complete first day calling each day.
- ❖ Send text messages to the families of all pupils who do not answer phone calls.
- ❖ Maintain SIMS attendance database.

Authorising Absence

Only the school may authorise absence

- ❖ Even when a parent / carer provides an explanation of absence the school will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.
- ❖ The school will clearly set out, in its Home School Agreement, obligations for parents / carers regarding attendance and punctuality.

Absence may be authorised if:

- ❖ The pupil is too ill to attend.
- ❖ The pupil is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- ❖ The pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent / carer belongs.
- ❖ There is a close family bereavement.
- ❖ The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence.

Absence should not be authorised if:

- ❖ No explanation is offered by the parent / carer.
- ❖ The school is not satisfied with an explanation offered.
- ❖ The pupil is staying home to look after parents, siblings or the home.
- ❖ The pupil is absent on special occasions eg birthday.
- ❖ The pupil is absent on a family holiday.
- ❖ The pupil is absent unnecessarily eg taken shopping, for a hair-cut.
- ❖ The pupil is absent for longer than agreed by the Headteacher.

Exceptional Leave During Term Time

Please refer to the Exceptional Leave During Term Time policy