ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance Policy

Policy Statement

The school maintains its Admissions and Attendance Registers in accordance with Statutory Regulations, as amended from time to time. The school adheres to Statutory Guidance when dealing with Children Missing from Education. The school will work in a collaborative way with external agencies, in accordance with the principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach taken to:

- Recording attendance information on a daily basis;
- Recording information at the point a pupil leaves the school; and
- Managing a situation when a pupil is deemed missing from education.

Contents

1. Attendance

1.1 Introduction

It is important that staff, parents and pupils are familiar with this policy. Regular school attendance from an early age creates a culture about the importance of education and learning so that all can benefit equally. Missing learning time leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and it is well known that poor attendance leads to lower levels of achievement.The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, beginning from the Early Years.

1.2 The legal framework

- Legislation specifies the legal responsibility of parent/carer(s) of statutory school age children to ensure they attend school. All children, regardless of their circumstances, areentitled to an efficient full-time education which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs; either by regular school attendance or home education.
- The same law requires the school to have an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register, and to place all children on both registers. Failure to do so is an offence. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014) requires a daily recordof the names of the children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance.

1.3 Link between attendance and achievement

There is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement, as well as a strong link between truancy and antisocial behaviour.

1.4 Parent/carer(s) responsibilities

- Encourage regular and punctual attendance, being fully aware of their legalresponsibilities.
- Ensure that the child in their care arrives punctually, prepared for learning.
- Provide clear reasons for any absence which ensures the school can code the absenceproperly and accurately.
- Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence as early as possible andpreferably before the start of the school day.
- Avoid making arrangements to remove children from school during term time.
- Respond helpfully and positively to any enquiry made by the school to ascertain thereason for any absence, including any safeguarding matter.

1.5 School responsibilities

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (deemedas attendance below 90%).
- Work to ensure every pupil has good attendance so he/she can access the educationhe/she is entitled to.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Encourage parents to ensure their child attends all learning opportunities regularly and punctually.
- Keep accurate and efficient records of attendance and registration at school, including attendance at all after school and before school activities.

We achieve this in the following ways:

- Teachers must take a register at least once in the morning and once in the afternoon;
- Mark all children not present by the designated time, taking account of absence notes;
- Follow up un-notified first day absence with a telephone call to the parent/carer(s);
- Specifically monitor any persistent absence (individual attendance below 90%);
- Proper use of the DfE national codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations, including preservation of the entries on both the Admissions and Attendance Registers for a period of three years after it was made;
- Only the Head or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence;
- Close discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to identify children causing concern
- Close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where there are concerns of children being missing from education – see Section 3 of this document;
- Implementing any agreed improvement strategies, such as referral to the local authority attendance services and/or children's social care in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures; and
- Provide parent/carer(s) with the timings of the school day and the calendar via the school website and any other usual method such as the school newsletter, in advance.

1.6 Late arrival

It is essential that, if a pupil arrives late, they should sign in at the school office so our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times.

1.7 Leaving school early during the day

- Pupils are not permitted to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff or their known parent/carer; or to attend a school visit, an off-site scheduled lesson, or a sporting fixture.
- If a pupil has to leave the school during the day for illness or a parent is required to collect them for a medical appointment, they are required to sign out at the School Office. Where there are known medical appointments, parents should notify the school in advance.

1.8 Requests for absence from parent/carer(s)

- Schools, not parents, authorise absence. Requests to the school for granting permission for leave of absence to a pupil during term time must be made in writing in advance directly to the Head. The Head is only able to authorise leave of absence where exceptional circumstances relate to the application.
- We ask that parents make contact with the school when a child is going to be absent for ill health reasons in order that the school can keep records updated and, importantly, so that the school can be kept informed of their progress to full health and anticipated return date. If necessary, the school may ask for medical evidence of any illness. We expect any absence for illness to be evidenced by a note from the parent/carer(s) as soon as possible.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised if a child is away from school without the permission of the Head in advance.

1.9 Persistent absentees

Persistent absentees are pupils with attendance below 90%. Once this threshold is met, monitoring will begin (see attendance flowchart).

1.10 Maintaining records

The school's Attendance Register, kept by means of a computer, is backed up in the form of an electronic copy at least once a month.

2.   Children Missing in Education

2.1 Introduction

- 'Children missing from education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.'
- Children missing from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

2.2 Statutory guidance

The school will follow the statutory guidance 'Children Missing from Education.'

2.3 School requirements

- Schools must enter pupils on the Admissions Register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.
- Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily register. Schools should agree with their local authority the intervals at which they will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission. Schools should monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.
- Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the Admissions Register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

2.4 Safeguarding

The school has a safeguarding duty in respect of its pupils, and as part of this will investigate any unexplained absences.

Annex – Attendance Guidance for Parents

1. Introduction

Regular school attendance from an early age creates a culture about the importance of education and learning so that all can benefit equally. Missing learning time leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and it is well-known that poor attendance leads to lower levels of achievement. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents, and the child, beginning from the early years.

2. The legal framework

Legislation in the UK specifies the legal responsibility of parent/carer(s) of statutory school age children to ensure they attend school.

The same law requires the school to have an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register, and to place all children on both registers. Failure to do so is an offence.

3. Link between attendance and achievement

There is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement:
- Of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five A*to C's including English and Maths;
- Of pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve five A* to C's GCSEs including English and Maths; and
- Of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve five A* to C's including English and Maths.

4. Parent/carer(s) responsibilities
- Encourage regular and punctual attendance, being fully aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that the child in their care arrives punctually, prepared for learning.
- Provide clear reasons for any absence which ensures the school can code the absence properly and accurately.
- Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence as early as possible and preferably before the start of the school day.
- Avoid making arrangements to remove children from school during term time.
- Respond helpfully and positively to any enquiry made by the school to ascertain the reason for any absence, including any safeguarding matter.

5. School responsibilities
- Promote good attendance and reduce absence.
- Work to ensure every pupil has good attendance so he/she can access the education he/she is entitled to.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Encourage parents to ensure their child attends all learning opportunities regularly and punctually.
- Keep accurate and efficient records of attendance and registration at school, including attendance at all after school and before school activities.

6. Late arrival

It is essential that, if a pupil arrives late, they sign in at the school office so that our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times.

Attendance <90%

Tutor Monitors – Attendance Improves?

No

Yes

Tutor Contacts Parents – Attendance Improves?

Yes

Continue to monitor

No

Individual Plan Put in Place

Medical need identified.

Emotional need identified.

Matron and DHP engage with parents to formulate an action plan. Attendance Improves?

School psychologist/HoMH WB and DHP engage with parents to formulate an action plan. Attendance Improves?

Yes

Yes

No

No

Continue to monitor

DSL contacts Surrey Inclusion Officer for advice and consultation (this may be done at any point during the process)