

## **School Attendance Policy**

### **1. Statement of Intent**

- The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children enrolled at the school attend both regularly and punctually.

### **2. Parents' Responsibilities**

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of statutory school age attend punctually and on a full-time basis.
- Parents should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should contact the school as soon as possible on the first morning of absence and each day thereafter until they return to school. This may be done by email, phone or in person. On the first day of absence, parents should give an expected timescale for the child's return to school.
- If a sickness lasts beyond 5 school days, the school reserves the right to request a medical note confirming this.
- Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. (Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school will record such absence as unauthorised)
- Parents should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (8.30am). If a child arrives after 8.35am his/her parent should report directly to the school office as the gate to the playground will be locked.
- Parents must complete a signing in form if their child is late giving a reason for the lateness.
- The head teacher no longer has discretion to agree up to 10 days leave for a family holiday during term time. Instead they can only agree to a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. These decisions are discussed with Governors and are only granted in extreme circumstances.

### **3. School Responsibilities**

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- Registers will be called twice daily (at 8.30am and at 1.00pm). Children arriving after 8.35am will be given a late mark or, if they arrive when the registers have closed at 8.50am, will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence unless there is a valid reason for the lateness. Valid reasons would include medical appointments (involving the child) but not over sleeping.
- Teachers will complete registers in accordance with Local Authority guidance. Should a child be absent the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register (School Attendance Guidance Codes – October 2014).
- The Business Manager receives the registers each morning to ensure that these are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage. When the school is not notified of the reason for a child's absence the Business Manager will contact the parents by telephone or text message.
- Unexplained absences will initially try to be resolved by a phone call from the Business Manager, if this is not successful then a letter home will be issued requesting a meeting with the head teacher. If it still remains unresolved then advice will be sought from the Local authority and Targeted Support may be required.
- Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality the head teacher should be informed.
- The head teacher will collect attendance data to discuss with Governors on a termly basis.

- Longer term medical absences (consistent or intermittent) will be discussed with parents and monitored by outside agencies when necessary. Medical proof of the need to be absent could be sought in some cases.
- Regular attendance is defined as 95% and attendance will be identified as a concern if it falls below this, or if there is an emerging pattern to the absence. The head teacher will contact parents to discuss the situation in the first instance, if unresolved then a letter will be sent requesting a meeting and if the situation still does not improve then advice will be sought from the Local Authority. Support will be put in place to ensure attendance is improved but in some cases continued poor attendance could lead to more formal action being taken.
- Any child who leaves this school is kept on the register for 4 weeks or until notified by the receiving school. The Local Authority is informed after 4 weeks if it is not known where the child has gone.
- Nottinghamshire County Council's Information and Systems Team have implemented a School Starters and Leavers secure on-line form which we are required to use. It enables us to provide the LA with changes to our admission register thus enabling both the LA and school to fulfil their safeguarding duties for all children in Nottinghamshire. It is used when we have starters/leavers on dates other than statutory ones i.e. end of school year, in-year admissions or transfers in.

#### **4. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

- Authorised absence covers illness, attendance at doctors, hospital, clinic, dentist and any other visit a child may need to make concerning their health and well-being.
- Holiday requests made by parents are unauthorised in accordance with the DCSF Keeping Pupil Registers – Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations. Holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances by the Governing Body.

#### **5. Penalty Notices**

- If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, his/her parent/carer (s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.
- The Local Authority may take formal action against you for failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution, but may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.
- Therefore, your child's irregular attendance could result in one of the following actions:

A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice for each period of unauthorised absence is £80 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.

This could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Head Teacher



Chair of Governors



Reviewed September 2024

Next review date - September 2025