



Document Adopted By Governing Body	
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Signed (Chair):	Kevin Corke
Date:	September 2023
Head Teacher Print Name:	Emma Hardy
Date of Next Review:	Septmber 2024

## Attendance Policy

**2023-24**

## 1. Policy Statement

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. Ecclesall Primary 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.

We aim to work with parents/carers to develop good habits of punctuality and encourage 'self' responsibility. We are, therefore, committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parent/carers.

### 1.1 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

### 1.2 The Law

**The 2006 Education Act requires that:**

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- The Local Authority 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 the Local Authority 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

## 2. Partnership

### 2.1 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 e.g. P.E. 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

### 2.2 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 wherever possible. Further guidance is offered under the section **Holidays in term time** later in this policy

- To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school
- To provide a note, signed by the parent/carer, when the child returns to school explaining the reason for absence, if the school has not spoken to parent/carer. This will be filed and may be produced if requested by officers of the Attendance and Inclusion Service

### 2.3 What parents/carers and pupils can expect from the school

- A broad, balanced education that is dependant on regular attendance at school
- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school, and regular encouragement and rewards
- 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 officers from the Local Authority to assist and support families where needed
- Regular communication with parents/carers

### 2.4 Partnership with parents/carers

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

- When attendance is of serious concern contact may be made by the Attendance and Inclusion Service.
- 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.

## 3. Procedures

Registers are a legal document. Attendance of all pupils is monitored and evaluated regularly using the following procedures:

### 3.1 Registration

- Registration takes place each morning at 8.50 am for KS2 children and 8.55am for EYFS/KS1 children and each afternoon at 1.00pm for Y6 and EYFS and 1.10 pm for all other children. This is completed on line.
- KS2 Pupils walk into school from the playground by staff and EYFS and KS1 children enter school with parents and carers to their classrooms.
- Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) in ink in the register for each pupil present and an absent mark (-) for any pupil that is absent, unless they know the reason, which will then be recorded. Any notes received will be sent to the Office for checking by office staff. All notes will be kept in a file until the end of year and be made available to officers from the Attendance and Inclusion Service where appropriate.

### 3.2 Responding to lateness

- Pupils arriving in the classroom after registers have been returned to the office are deemed to be late. The pupil should be sent to the office where their (-) mark is amended to L.
- At 10.00 am and 2pm the pupil is deemed to be Late/absent. Any pupil arriving in school after these times will be marked 'u'. In case of emergency the register shows the pupil is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance
- Parents/carers will be contacted by phone if their child is late more than once in a two week period.
- If the lateness persists then parents will be invited to school to discuss the problem.
- The Attendance officer at SCC will be informed if the situation does not improve.

### 3.3 Responding to absence – criteria for requesting support from the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)/Advanced Practitioner (Attendance)

- Home/school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance
- Patterns of absence
- Poor overall attendance (e.g. 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 Request for Support Form is completed by the school and passed to the Attendance Officer. The pupil's name is then placed on the concerns list. The Head teacher and school will then closely monitor the pupil's attendance and, if necessary, make contact with the parent/carer in an attempt to resolve any issues.
- In the case of on-going sickness Medical evidence may be required by the school and copied to be kept on file. The School Nurse may be contacted to liaise with families experiencing difficulties.
- 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 Attendance Officer or other professionals if deemed appropriate.
- When a pupil has not attended for 10 school days the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Attendance Officer.

### 4. Children Missing from Education

The Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teachers are the nominated members of school staff to 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 (**See policy *Children Missing from Education***)

### 5. Children in Public Care

The Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teachers are the co-ordinators who liaise with the Children and Young People's Directorate Looked After Children Team. Looked After Children will be set up as an Attendance Group on SIMS and their individual attendance will be checked each half term.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### 7.1 Governors

- Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Head Teacher and the Local Authority via the Head Teacher report
- Attend School Attendance Panels as necessary

### 7.2 Head Teacher

- Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school
- Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- Liaises with the Link Advisor, Advanced Practitioner for Attendance & Inclusion and other officers of the Local Authority to set targets and implement attendance strategies
- Works with the Deputy Heads to implement targets, review statistics and amend the policy as necessary
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within SWIP.
- Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of children Looked After by the Local Authority
- Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education

### 7.3 Deputy Head

- Maintains an overview of attendance and manages the day to day implementation of attendance plans and strategies
- Liaises with the Senior Inclusion Officer and school office staff to produce and evaluate attendance statistics
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster

### 7.4 Class teachers

- Accurately mark registers on line promptly following registration, in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Send any notes received to the Office for the attention of office staff
- 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.

### 7.5 School clerk and office staff

- Receive, update and maintain accurate database in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Maintain SIMS attendance database and update on a weekly basis
- Provide reports from SIMS to governors, Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teachers, Local Authority officers as requested
- Provide relevant information to Local Authority officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality

### 7.6 Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) - Attendance

#### Advanced practitioner - Attendance

- Liaise with the Head Teacher, school staff and officers of the Local Authority to promote good attendance and punctuality within school, cluster and wider community
- Support the Head Teacher and DHTs to produce, review and action the school's Attendance Plan and Attendance Policy, along with producing a Parent Policy for clear guidance and information
- Support the school to develop whole school strategies relating to attendance and inclusion. Offering advice, analysis and monitoring of attendance issues
- Work closely with the MAST team and school staff regarding the pupil concerns list, discuss and agree appropriate courses of action when necessary, including prosecution procedures as appropriate
- Attend appropriate meetings e.g., School Attendance Panel, termly reviews.
- Take an active part in attendance assemblies and other initiatives aimed at promoting attendance and punctuality
- Maintain, review and analyse attendance information, statistics and reports. Provide reports to appropriate bodies e.g. governors and officers of the Local Authority

## Attendance Officer

- Liaise with school staff regarding the attendance and punctuality of identified pupils. Receive attendance data and agree action
- Make contact with parents/carers where concern is raised regarding a pupil's attendance.
- Discuss issues affecting attendance and punctuality with parents/carers and clearly outline legal responsibilities and requirements
- Record and maintain accurate information following contact
- Feedback to school staff within the agreed timescale
- Work with the Advanced Practitioner, school staff, parents/carers and pupils to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Take part in initiatives to promote attendance and punctuality e.g. assemblies

## 8. Authorising Absence

### 8.1 Only the school may authorise absence.

- Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the school will decide whether or not to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.
- The school will clearly set out, in its Parent Policy, obligations for parents/carers regarding attendance and punctuality

### 8.2 Absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil is too ill to attend school
- 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
- The school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority *unless the parents/carers have chosen to send their child to a school which is not within walking distance*
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- 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
- If leave of absence is granted *by the Head Teacher* for a 1 day significant family event such as a family wedding, 70<sup>th</sup> birthday etc. Term time holidays cannot be authorised.

### 8.3 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 e.g. birthday
- The pupil is absent on a one day significant family event for longer than agreed by the Head Teacher
- The pupil is absent on a family holiday not agreed by the Head Teacher
- The pupil is absent unnecessarily e.g. taken shopping, for a haircut

### 8.4 Term time absence

Parents/carers wishing to take a pupil out of school for a holiday should be actively discouraged. However, the Head Teacher **may authorise a 1 day significant family event or a term time absence in exceptional circumstances**. A leave request form must be filled in by the parent/carer and given to the Head Teacher for

consideration. The school will inform parent/carers in writing whether the time has been authorised (it should be made clear why a decision has been made and the criteria used should be re-iterated).

<https://ecclesallprimary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Term-Time-Leave-Policy-Revised-Oct-2018-Adopted.pdf>

#### 8.5 Holidays will not be authorised

If an unauthorised holiday is taken consideration could be given to issuing a Penalty Notice (see appendix). The Attendance Officer/MAST team will, after consulting with school, consider each case taking into consideration any mitigating circumstances and make a decision. The Local Authority (LA) will inform the school of the outcome and carry out any necessary action.

It is essential that both the Local Authority and the school be consistent so that there can be no allegations of bias or favouritism. If it is seen that the policy is not being applied consistently the Local Authority will not be able to apply a Notice.

#### **Responsibility for maintaining policy**

Head Teacher

#### **Review date**

January – Annually, or more frequently should further advice arrive from LA

Agreed with Staff & Governors

### Penalty Notices

New provisions have been made within the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to tackle the issue of truancy and irregular school attendance. These include Penalty Notices and Parenting Contracts. Sheffield Local Authority officers will abide by the following Code of Conduct and government guidance set out in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 when administering Penalty Notices.

#### 1. When a Penalty Notice may be administered

Sheffield Local Authority officers may administer a Penalty Notice in the following circumstances:

Phase 1 – Commenced 11/04/05

- As a result of a term time holiday that a Head Teacher has not authorised *see previous page*

Phase 2 – Commenced 01/09/05

- As a result of being stopped for the second time during truancy sweeps where there is an unacceptable reason for the child being absent from school and they are with their parent/carer.

Phase 3 – Commencing 01/01/06

- As an alternative to court prosecution by Sheffield City Council
  1. Where a child is attending school less than 90%, of which at least 20% of the absence is unauthorised without statutory defence.
  2. Where the parent/carer is judged capable of making sure their child attends regularly, but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so.
  3. Penalty Notices will be used at an earlier stage than a court prosecution, before attendance problems become severe.

1.1. **In all of the above phases, the child must also have an attendance record of less than 90%, with at least 20% of the absence being unauthorised.**

1.2. When considering the use of a Penalty Notice, Sheffield Local Authority officer's first response will be in the form of a formal written warning. In exceptional circumstances, however, a Penalty may be used as a first response. This could be where the unauthorised absence was for an extended period and condoned by the parent, for example where the parent has chosen to take their child on holiday during term time without authorisation.

Further information is available in guidance notes, a copy of which is held in school, titled ***Education Related Provisions included in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Penalty Notice***