

# *Duddon Saint Peter's School*



## **Attendance Policy**

### **Aim**

We aim to ensure that our students benefit fully from the education we seek to provide by maximising the attendance of each student. We believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too that children arrive and leave school on time, and equally that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

Through communication with parents/carers we will ensure that they are made fully aware of the school's Policy on Attendance, and that all children are made aware of the value of regular attendance.

### **We expect that all pupils will:**

- attend school regularly
- attend school punctually

### **We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:**

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually for registration at 9.00am. Children who arrive after this time will be marked as late in the register.
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is/are unable to attend school.
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, no later than 10am.
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

### **We expect that school staff will:**

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily.
- contact parents as soon as possible, when a pupil fails to attend, and no message has been received to explain the absence by 10am.
- encourage good attendance.
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment and provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns.
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly to express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance.
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Officer.

## **Holidays**

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays.

**The law from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.** Any applications for leave of absence must be in exceptional circumstances and the Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. **Applications for leave of absence must be submitted to the school at least one month in advance.**

**Parents will be fined by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. Fines incurred will be: £60 per child, per parent.**

The following circumstances are suggested as reasons to give authorised leave for holiday absences due to 'exceptional circumstances':

- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark on a tour of duty abroad
- When it is company policy for an employee to take leave only at a specified time in the year (evidence required)
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue (evidence required)
- May include special occasions such as attending the wedding of a family member or the birth of a sibling
- A unique situation such as the serious illness of a parent, grandparent or other close relative and the holiday is likely to be the last opportunity to experience the holiday together
- A significant family trauma where the child may benefit from the holiday to deal with the situation better
- Being of a unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

## **Appointments:**

- Wherever possible, dental or medical appointments should be arranged for children out of school hours. If this is not possible, the school will request to see evidence of an appointment letter or card for the appointment. This should be presented to the school office before the child is removed from school.

## **Lateness:**

- The school and the Governing Body wish to ensure that all children attend school punctually.
- To this end, parents/carers will receive a monthly letter, outlining the number of occasions on which their child has been late arriving for school.
- If the child has **5 late marks** in the register in a half term, this will trigger a meeting of the head teacher with parents to discuss the issue, and plan steps for improvement.

- If the child has **10 late marks** in the register in a term, this will trigger a meeting of the head teacher and the Education Welfare Officer with parents to discuss the issue further.
- These meetings will be accompanied by a pro-forma letter which will be completed in the meetings and retained by the school.

#### **Broken weeks:**

- Where a child has **3 broken weeks** due to absence within a half term, this will trigger a meeting with the head teacher to discuss the issue and plan steps for improvement.
- Where a child has **6 broken weeks** due to absence within a term, this will trigger a meeting with the head teacher and Education Welfare Officer to discuss the issue and plan further steps for improvement.
- These meetings will be accompanied by a pro-forma letter which will be completed in the meetings and retained by the school.

#### **Responding To Non-Attendance**

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no message is received from the parent/carer by 10a.m., the school will endeavour to contact them that day. If the family are not on the telephone, a letter will be sent.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If, by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made, (third day if waiting for a response to a letter), the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers or invite them into school to discuss their concerns. The school will tell parents that if the absence persists, a referral will be made to Education Welfare.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the EWS may result in further action.

#### **Changing schools**

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- the address of the new school
- the new home address, if it is known

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to Education Welfare.

## School

In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

### **Head teacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:**

- adopt the whole policy.
- ensure that registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided.
- initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence.
- ensure that key staff have appropriate access to attendance data in order to liaise with, and follow-up work with the EWS.
- consult and liaise closely with the EWS on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay.
- work in close collaboration with the EWS during their timetabled register analysis visits to monitor and evaluate attendance.

### **Class teachers:**

- to complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- to follow up any unexplained non-attendance
- to record all reasons for absences in the register
- to inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance of any concerns

Signed: .....

Governor responsible

Signed: .....

Head teacher

Date: July 2017

Date of review *Summer 2018*