



Statutory Policy

on

Attendance

Drafted by:
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Signed by Chair of PDWB Committee on behalf of the FGB:

Review Date:
February 2020

Person(s) Responsible for Day to Day Management:
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Person Responsible for Review:
Mr A Leese
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Attendance Policy

This Attendance policy aims to:-

- Ensure a whole school attendance figure of 95% and above.
- Ensure the % of persistent absentees is at least in line with national average
- Monitor the attendance of students by:
 - Year Group
 - Vulnerable groups
 - Pupil premium
 - SEN
 - EAL
- Monitor the punctuality of all students and ensure sanctions are applied consistently

Principles

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by students will be recognised appropriately, through the issuing of the appropriate rewards/awards. All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised. Only school can authorise the absence. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents keeping children off school without reason
- truancy before or during the school day
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always

successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Worker (EWW) from the Local Support Team (LST) or provider of the service level agreement for attendance support. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWW themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office.

Procedures:

- All students must attend morning registration in their tutor rooms at 8.35am.
- Students arriving on site after 8.35am will have their name taken at the school gate and a same-day detention issued.
- All teaching staff must take an electronic register at the start of each lesson.
- Students arriving late to lessons must be registered as normal using the behaviour for learning scores and the number of minutes late entered into the system.
- Afternoon registration is taken as part of the Period 5 register. This must be completed before 2:00pm.
- Any student leaving school before the end of the school day must sign out at the school reception and show written reason why they are leaving school early.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian/carer to make the school aware of a child's absence and the reason for it. Parents/guardians/carers should contact the school before the start of the school day and state why the child is absent and where possible for how long the absence will last.

Monitoring:

The responsibility for dealing with the attendance of students lies with the Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Safety), though the data required to monitor students and the administration of letters will be provided by the Attendance Officer. All procedures are monitored and reported on by the Assistant Headteacher (Behaviour and Safety).

Termly procedures

Autumn term:

- Attendance Officer to highlight any PA's from previous year and any PA's in Yr 7 that we have been informed about from feeder schools.
- Initial Attendance Meetings will take place with the Attendance Officer, a member of SLT and the EWW if early concerns are raised (i.e. students who were red the previous term begin the new term with poor attendance). See appendix 3 for agenda.
- During the year attendance data is produced and given to Heads of Year.
 - HoY to contact parents where necessary

- Parents/carers of PA students should be contacted and asked to come into school to discuss any issues. A 'warning letter' must be sent home. If this is not the first 'warning letter' then a referral to the EWW should be made and appropriate proceedings will be started.
- Attendance data by sub-groups will also be produced and analysis will allow the school to see if any particular group is having disproportionately poor attendance
- The process repeats itself through the year with attendance data being provided regularly and letters being sent at the end of each term.

Lates procedure:

- Students arriving late after 8:35 will have their name taken on the gate and a same-day detention issued.
- Failure to attend this detention will result in an after school detention with the Head of Year.
- Students arriving for morning registration after 8.45am must go to main reception to sign in.

Term-time holidays

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 previously allowed Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Head teachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.
- Changes to the law as of **1 September 2013**, mean that head teachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- If a parent still decides to take their child on holiday, when leave is not granted, the parents could be issued with a Penalty Notice ("fine").

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

- Changes have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These changes also came into force on **1 September 2013**.
- Penalty notices can be used where the student's absence has not been authorised by the school and fines imposed on parents. If a Penalty Notice is served, parents must, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix 1

LA Letter to parents regarding Penalty Notices/Leave of Absence

Dear Parent/Carer

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced important changes to the law for families wanting to take holidays in term time.

Term-time holidays

The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) previously allowed head teachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Head teachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

However, the changes make clear that head teachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time for holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers will now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Parents may receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking their child out of school during term time without consent from the school. From September 2013 these Notices now cost £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days.

In the academic year 2011 to 2012, **9.7% of all absences in England were due to parents taking their children out of school during term time**. This high level of absence has led the Government to make this important change.

As a Local Authority we understand the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays, particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects that they should be in school during term time.

The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents that do ignore the law.

Further information can be obtained from www.dfe.gov.uk.

Appendix 2

LA Parents Leaflet – Penalty Notices

Education Penalty Notices

Information for Parents

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. The local authority can now issue Penalty Notices if a parent fails to make sure that their children receive the education they deserve. This leaflet tells you about these notices.

School Attendance and the Law

Any absence from school is a cause for concern. Only by attending every day will your child have the best chance to get the most from their education.

The headteacher at your child's school must decide whether to authorise an absence. That is to agree that there was a legitimate reason for your child not to be in school.

There are only four legitimate reasons for absence:

- Religious observance
- Illness of the child
- The death of a close family member
- An urgent medical or dental appointment

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) can take legal action against you if you fail to make sure that your children go to school regularly and there is no legitimate reason for the absence. This action might take one of two forms:

- The issuing of a Penalty Notice
- Prosecution in the local Magistrates Court

This information is about Penalty Notices and how the EWS will issue them.

What they are

Penalty Notices are fines, issued by Staffordshire EWS, for a child's unauthorised absence from school.

The service will always consider legal action when there is no legitimate reason for absence.

How they will be issued

Notices will be issued by post. They will not be issued during a Truancy Sweep or as part of a meeting with parents.

The EWS will not take legal action if previously poor attendance is now improving.

Instead they'll monitor the case and support the pupil. If attendance doesn't improve, or if absences begin to increase the EWS will re-assess the case to see if legal action is needed.

Penalty Notices

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Changes have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These changes also came into force on **1 September 2013**.

Penalty notices can be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and fines imposed on parents. If a Penalty Notice is served, parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Further information

If you would like further information about Penalty Notices please contact your district Education Welfare Team:

If you have concerns about your child's education you should, initially, discuss these with school.

Appendix 3

Agenda for initial attendance meeting with student and parents/guardians.

Item:

1. List the missed sessions, checking for patterns; times/subjects.
2. Get parent/guardian to confirm reasons for absences.
3. Look at past history (previous academic year's attendance, go back further if necessary).
4. Look at the number of days lost over the year if this level of absenteeism continues. Ensure parents/guardians know that < 90% is persistent absence.
5. Look at the consequences of poor attendance.
 - a. Education
 - b. Routines are important
 - c. Job/work ethic/references
6. Look at the consequences if things do not improve.
 - a. Grey letter
 - b. Red letter
 - c. EWW
 - d. Court proceedings
 - e. Penalty notice
7. Offer support as needed i.e. referral to Local Support Team
8. Finish on a positive.
 - a. Improve attendance
 - b. Improve understanding
 - c. Improve grades
 - d. Improve job prospects
 - e. Improve life chances