

Barmby Moor and Garton on the Wolds CE VC Primary School

Policy & Guidelines for Attendance and Punctuality 2013 - 2014

Introduction

- Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer.
- There is a clear link between attendance, punctuality and achievement.
- We recognise that excellent attendance is not always a priority among some parents and we work, together with a number of outside agencies, to try to alter attitudes where this is the case.
- Excellent attendance is important if children are to be encouraged to be valuable members of society.
- There is a clear link between non-attendance and social exclusion; this can lead to involvement in crime.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with guidelines on exclusion, behaviour, anti-bullying and other documentation referring to social inclusion.

Aims

- To have a manageable whole school approach to attendance procedures.
- To promote excellent attendance and punctuality in order to ensure continuity of education and maximise children's academic potential.
- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and to work with parents if difficulties arise.
- To work alongside other agencies, including Educational Welfare, if difficulties arise so that effective action can be put into place.
- To ensure children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality by rewarding children who achieve it.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality effectively so difficulties are quickly highlighted.
- To make everyone aware of the detrimental effect of absences and lateness on the education of our children.

Inclusion

- We are committed to providing an inclusive school where all children have the opportunity to maximise their potential.
- Staff should respond appropriately to children's diverse needs and be aware of the needs of children with differing: genders, special educational needs, disabilities and cultural ethnic and social backgrounds.
- Teachers are aware of the need to overcome potential barriers to learning and the importance of attendance and punctuality as an aspect of this.
- We are committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and this is reflected in the conduct of staff and pupils and how attendance and punctuality is managed within the school.

Absence

Absence is categorised as authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised Absence:

- Genuine illness – although, if the length of illness is considered to be unreasonable this will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Medical and dental appointments - where it is unavoidable that they take place in school time (appointment cards should always be seen).
- Family Bereavements - for an agreed period of time.
- Days of religious observance - advance notice should be given in this case.
- Temporary exclusion - as a result of a specific action by the Head Teacher.
- Permanent exclusion - while the appeal process is ongoing.
- Attendance at a Pupil Referral Unit - where attendance is dual registered.
- Late arrival before registers close (indicated by an L on the register).
- Late arrival after registers close (indicated by a U on the register).

Unauthorised Absence:

- **Unexplained absences** - the School Business Manager sends a letter to the parents/carers, in the first instance, if no explanation is provided.
- **Truancy** - Staying off school **for haircuts, purchase of party clothes, shoes etc**

Procedures for Teachers

- Registers must be taken by 9am and 1:10pm.
- The list of attendance codes (Appendix 1) must be strictly adhered to.
- **All** children should be marked either present or absent.
- Registers close at 9.15am and at 1:20pm.
- **Notes** explaining absence should be placed in the plastic pocket and the absence report filled in appropriately.
Verbal explanations should also be recorded on the class register and the absence report as appropriate.

Concerns about Absence and lateness

The designated member of staff, Headteacher and School Business Manager meet weekly to monitor attendance. A printout of absences of 96% and below is scrutinised and acted upon.

Procedures for Dealing with Absence and Lateness

- On the first day of absence parents must inform the school of the reason for their child's absence.
- This reason must be recorded in the absence book and on SIMS.
- If no message is received, a member of the admin team will telephone or use text messaging service the parents/carers of all unexplained absentees from 9:30am onwards and record explanations in the absence book and on SIMS.
- If no response is forthcoming this should be recorded in the absence book and on SIMS.
- The late book will be used to record the names of all children who are late and who must report to the school office.
- Trends in absences are scrutinised by the Head Teacher, School Business Manager and Education Welfare Officer.

Procedures with Registers

- All attendance information is input into SIMS on Friday afternoons.

Monitoring Procedures

- First day response calls are made in the first instance by the school admin team.
- Persistent lateness is monitored by the Headteacher and School Business Manager.
- Weekly checks will be made to ascertain any children whose attendance is below 96%. In this case the following procedures are followed:
 1. Warning letter from school (Appendix 3).
 2. Monitor
 3. Invitation into school to discuss issues
 4. Monitor
 5. Visit to home by the EWO
 6. Monitor
 7. Formal Governors' Attendance Working Party meeting in school
 8. Monitor
 9. Formal proceedings
 10. Fast-tracking can be considered at any time

Attendance Rewards

- Every child that has 100% attendance for a whole term receives a certificate at the end of term or the beginning of the next term.
- Every child that has 100% attendance for the whole school year receives a certificate and a prize on the last day of the summer term.
- The class with the best attendance each week receives the attendance cup given in Friday morning's assembly.

Absence during Term Time

- Absence during term time must be due to exceptional circumstances (holidays are not exceptional circumstances).

- The Head Teacher will consider each request and make a decision accordingly.

Liaison with Parents/Carers

Attendance and punctuality are mentioned in every half termly newsletter to parents. Posters showing the effects of attendance and lateness are on display throughout the school.

Role of Governors

Governors determine support and review school policies. They support the aims of this policy by making resources available wherever possible. They receive termly reports concerning attendance, which they use for monitoring purposes. . Governors meet with parents/carers at Governors' Attendance Panels.

Next review: September 2015

GUIDANCE ON THE COMPLETION AND USE OF ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

Registers must be completed in BLACK ink at the beginning of each session

- 9.00am and 1.05pm
- Under no circumstances should registers be completed in pencil.
- Under no circumstances must any child be marked present if they are not in school even if it is known that they are expected.

Absences

- Any absences should be left blank (unless an error has been made - see below). Red absence marks will be entered by the administrative staff, who will add the relevant code e.g. m for medical etc.
- Letters or messages about absences should be placed in the register and sent to the school office with the registers after morning registration (these letters are retained)

Late arrivals and children leaving during the school day

- Children arriving after 9.20 or after 1.20 must be marked as absent, even when staff are aware that the child will be late.
- A message should be sent to the school office when a child arrives.
- A message must also be sent to the office if a child leaves or arrives after dinner registers have been completed.

Mistakes

- If a mistake is made then this must not be erased in any way.
- The correct mark should be added and a note written in the space below the year group for that child (assuming there is space, if no space is available then the note should be written below the whole class list) and as near to the error as possible.
- Where a child has been marked present when they are absent, and a note should be sent with the register to the secretary who will then draw a red circle over the attendance mark.

Location of registers

- Registers must be sent to the school office after completion in the morning and afternoon.
- In the absence of the administrative staff then the registers must be kept in classrooms.

Fire alarms and other emergencies

- Should the fire alarm sound, (or other emergency requiring evacuation) then the registers and log books must be removed from the building to ensure a correct head count by the Admin Officer.
- It is the responsibility of the administrative staff to bring the registers, if this has been possible.
- Should administrative staff be absent or unavailable then a Teaching Assistant should collect the registers from the office, providing their own safety and that of the children is not at risk.

