



MICKLEOVER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Name of Policy: Attendance

Date of Policy: November 2017

Member of Staff responsible: L Gerver

Review date: November 2019

Signature: _____ **Chair of Governors**

Date Approved: _____

At Mickleover Primary School

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Attendance Policy

INTRODUCTION

All children of compulsory school age have the right to receive a full-time education regardless of aptitude, ability and background.

We are proud of our attendance record which is generally very good and are grateful to our supportive parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children. Regular attendance is essential if a child is to reach their full educational potential. Irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning and undermines educational progress. This can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Governors, teachers, Education Welfare Officer (EWO), parents and guardians. We seek to ensure an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support. School staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

AIMS

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:-

- Promoting a positive, welcoming and caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels safe, secure and valued.
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and to improve the overall attendance percentage.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and with other services and agencies.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

What is expected of the parent:-

- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the right equipment to learn. A reason should be offered for lateness.
- To report to school on the first day of absence why your child is not attending school. There is a 24 hour answer phone for parents to leave a message.
- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum.
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and to be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in special / exceptional circumstances.
- To work closely with the school and Educational Welfare Officer to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance.



- To be aware of curriculum requirements with regards to attendance during academic times such as SATS.
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements.

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Parents have a legal responsibility requiring this and may be prosecuted under the 1996 Education Act if they fail to do so. The aim of the act is to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure a suitable education for their children.

If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home the school will offer support with the co-operation of the Educational Welfare Officer and the services of The Children's and Young Peoples department to ensure the child attends school regularly.

What is expected of the pupils:-

- To respect themselves and others.
- To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually.
- To inform a trusted adult if they are concerned about their wellbeing in school.

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in school life and to make the most of educational opportunities available. To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.

What is expected of the school:-

- To create a school ethos that pupils and staff want to be part of.
- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance and to meet the legal requirements set out by the Government.
- To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absences with effective monitoring and interventions.
- To promote good attendance and punctuality by the use of effective strategies.
- To encourage open communication between home and school.
- To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the EWO.
- To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 Education Act.
- To adequately provide for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, within the bounds of the resources available, and to ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absences were authorised or unauthorised.

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide an education and to promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children. Through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) the Local Authority provides support to school and parents to fulfil their legal duty. The EWS is the enforcement agency of the Local Authority (LA) and as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take a parent to court for not full filling their duty under section

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444 of the Education Act 1996. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order, an Education Supervision Order or a Parenting Order.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Recording

The school day begins at **8.55am**. The gate opens at 8.45am and the pupils go straight into their classroom. All pupils should be in their classroom by 8.55am when the gate is closed. Punctuality stops valuable learning time from being wasted. The class teacher will take the register from 8.55am recording pupils who are present and those pupils who are absent.

Lateness

Any pupil arriving after 8.55am should enter the school through the main entrance. The office staff will ask the parent to sign a late book that records the name, class, time and reason for the lateness. If a child arrives unaccompanied by a parent the office staff will complete the record asking the pupil to offer a reason. All staff must be aware that any child arriving late must register at the school office for purposes of fire regulations. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of registration will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers closed. Once the register is closed, the lateness will be recorded as unauthorised.

If a pupil is frequently late, a letter will be sent to the parents/carers informing them of the school's concerns and they will be offered support to resolve any problems that may be preventing the child from arriving at school on time. The pupil's punctuality will be closely monitored and if after four weeks there is no improvement the parents of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the issue and resolve any issues preventing the child from arriving on time. If the parents/carers do not attend the meeting or after the meeting the pupil's punctuality does not improve, a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer.

First Day Absence

Reasons for absence must be offered verbally by telephone by 9.30am on the first day of absence. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, the school may request written medical evidence to authorise future absences until attendance improves. School may also phone parents informing them that their child is not in school and enquire about a reason why. The school will then authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence. This decision will be made within the guidance set out in the 1996 Education Act, which identifies the following reasons for an authorised absence:

- The child is ill or prevented from attending school by an unavoidable cause.
- The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith.
- The child is absent "with leave." This refers to leave being granted by the school, not the parent, and would normally relate to no more than 5 days in one academic year.

A reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents who have not offered a reason. If after 3 weeks no reason has been provided by a phone call or letter, the absences shall be marked in the register as unauthorised.



RETURN TO SCHOOL FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE

It is important that on the return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed on to the other pupils.

ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are explicit, exceptional circumstances eg bereavement of close family member.

Parents wishing to apply for term time absence for their child must complete an application for leave of absence.

If parents take their child out of school during term time without authorisation, this may result in a fixed penalty notice, per parent, per child, being issued by the Local Authority.

PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

The school will highlight the importance of good attendance by the use of the following:-

- Assemblies
- The class teacher
- Newsletters
- Term and holiday letters
- Parent workshops
- Parent evenings
- Staff being available to talk to both pupil and parent
- Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education lessons (PSHE)
- The Home/School agreement

The school will maintain accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any changes to their contact information as and when they occur by completing the update form available from the school office. The school will involve parents in attendance issues from the earliest stage - making first day contact by telephone in the event of a unknown absent. School will keep staff up to date with the absence strategy by use of staff meetings and provide professional development as appropriate.

MONITORING

The Headteacher, Learning Mentor and the EWO will review the attendance of all the school pupils on a termly basis. Any pupils identified as having less than 85% attendance on a regular basis or if there is cause for concern, a letter will be sent informing the parents/carers of the school's concerns and they will be offered support to resolve any problems that may be impeding the child from attending school. The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and if, after four weeks there is no improvement, the parents of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the issue and resolve any issues preventing the child from attending school. If the parents/carers do not attend the meeting or after the meeting the pupil's attendance does not improve, a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer.

The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assists the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed as appropriate and will provide information to assist the school strategically to manage attendance issues. The EWO will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support their role.

