



## Archibald First School

### Attendance and Punctuality Policy

#### Rationale

Pupils should want to come to School. They should be interested in the opportunities for learning and development, and be willing and able to contribute to the School as a community. It is essential that the School's effectiveness in terms of academic and social development is maximized through curriculum delivery and associated activities. One major factor that can help achieve this is a consistently high rate of pupil attendance. Those with a responsibility towards improving attendance are the pupil, their parents and everyone working in School.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

#### Aims

- To inform pupils and parents of the importance of attendance at School for pupil success.
- To improve and maintain attendance levels at School.
- To ensure that pupils, parents and everyone in the School know the high priority given by the School to good attendance.
- To inform pupils and parents that pupils will be missed when absent and what follow-up action will be taken.

#### Why?

The evidence indicates that children who attend School every day:

- Perform better academically
- Are better behaved at School and home
- Are successful in middle & high School

In contrast, children who are often absent from School:

- Do not perform to their potential
- Have difficulty getting along with others

## Truancy

There are four identified forms of truancy, blanket truancy, post-registration truancy (or runners), parentally-condoned truancy, and near truancy (switching off and presenting poor behaviour in School).

### Identifying Poor Attendees - a useful checklist.

Poor attendees can be pupils: -

- whose parents have recently separated.
- who have recently moved to the district.
- who join a School midway through the School year.
- who have recently missed a lot of School time through illness.
- whose sibling (and/ or parents) have been poor attendees.
- whose performance. attainment level in School tends to be poor.
- who tend to be teased or bullied.
- who have difficulty accessing the curriculum yet do not have a statement of SEN.
- who are persistently disruptive.
- who have previously been excluded.
- whose parents are experiencing severe financial hardship.
- who are under pressure from exams.

## Registers

1. Registers are legal documents and should be marked twice a day. Please follow the attached guidance for the use of the electronic system.
2. If a pupil is absent or late the appropriate flow chart is to be followed see appendix 1.
3. Parents must always give reasons for absence to the School.
4. Schools are to determine whether absence is authorised or unauthorised in exceptional circumstances, considering factors such as frequency, duration, attendance patterns, i.e. within reason. Staff must be observant of situations where absence is continually condoned by parents. The guidelines below clarify possible actions:

<b>AUTHORISED</b>	<b>UN-AUTHORISED</b>
Illness	Absence without valid reason.
A hospital medical/ dental appointment that cannot be made outside of the school day (8.45-3.15pm)	Latecomers beyond 30 mins after session starts
Family Bereavement	Persistent lateness within the first 30 minutes of the day
Religious observance	Minding the children, brothers or sisters.
Excluded children	Special occasions, e.g. birthday.
Sport/ Music/ Exams	Extended holidays
Agreed other educational reasons at the discretion of the Headteacher	

## **Improving Attendance**

The School seeks to improve general class attendance and to improve the attitude of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and ways of helping combat poor attendance in the form of an information sheet.
- b) Incentives used at the Schools discretion for example excellent attendance award and certificate presented at end of year attendance assembly.
- c) Persistent absentees must be followed up or reported to the Headteacher to co-ordinate the School response.
- d) Fortnightly attendance meeting is used for staff to share information and concerns re attendance of children who fall below 97%
- e) Fortnightly welfare meetings opportunity to share and follow up information from FSA and staff re vulnerable families.
- f) Attendance and welfare panel (Chair, Vice Chair and Headteacher) meet half-termly to discuss any attendance or welfare concerns.

**To support this aim, the School has daily and weekly routines:**

### **Daily Admin Attendance Routines**

- List the pupils who are late
- Check pupils are in School against on line registers
- Ring parents when pupil is not in School
- Contact Attendance Officer (CES) when contact cannot be made with parents
- After having received phone call/ made contact with parents, mark missing pupils on line with appropriate reason e.g ill or medical appointment
- Print attendance information for fortnightly attendance meeting and when requested by Head Teacher.

### **Weekly Lead Professional Attendance Routines**

- Deal with any concerns reported by teaching, classroom or adult staff.
- Check attendance of all pupils where attendance is less than 97% - check reasons for absence and follow up with Headteacher and/or attendance/welfare panel.
- Check attendance of all pupils where more than 3 sessions have been entered as late – check reasons for lateness and follow up with Head teacher and/or attendance/welfare group
- Check holiday requests against late and absence lists and liaise with class teacher re impact upon education before a decision is made. Holiday requests will only be authorised if there are exceptional circumstances, in line with the information given to parents. If authorised, complete paper work and return to Admin to update systems and send copy to parents. When holidays not agreed ensure parents have a clear understanding of reasons and actions needed

- Where attendance /lateness do not improve after HT and attendance/welfare group contact, arrange in School meetings, these to be followed up with Parenting Contract.
- Monitor impact of Parenting Contract and thank parents for their collaboration where improvements achieved or move to legal proceedings where child's education continues to be detrimentally affected by attendance / lateness.
- Take appropriate actions after unauthorised holidays taken including, if necessary arranging an attendance panel meeting.
- Refer to Family Support Advisor (FSA) where parents need any type of parental support. Work within the Gosforth Pyramid of Schools to maintain transition interaction and liaison to benefit all pupils in a family.

### **Reintegrating Long Term Absentees**

Following a long period of absence, a child may feel vulnerable, so staff may wish to arrange a phased or gradual return, allocation of a 'Key Worker', consider whether Special Needs support is appropriate, ensure that all staff are aware of the situation and nominate a key person to monitor the child's reintegration into School. All children must feel welcomed back and know from whom they can seek help. Never leave children sitting in corridors or outside an office for long periods.

### **Improving Punctuality**

The School seeks to improve general punctuality and to improve attitude of persistent offenders by:-

- a) Informing parents of our expectations and offer ways of helping combat lateness.
- b) Parents of persistent offenders must be contacted, and reported to the HT and attendance/welfare panel, if no improvement.
- c) Praise and acknowledge latecomers who improve.
- d) Ensure that staff set a good example by arriving punctually for lessons.
- e) All children and parents must understand that lateness is actively discouraged, although sensitivity may be appropriate in some cases.
- f) Schools may use other incentives to improve levels of punctuality
- g) The FSA will be used to support pupils and families will any of the above issues.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring of all these issues through fortnightly meetings and attendance/welfare panel meetings, will be the responsibility of the Head teacher, the class teachers, and the FSA who will all work together to resolve these issues with the family.

This policy was reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Leadership Support Committee.

**Reviewed: Autumn 2019**

**Next Review Date: Summer 2022**

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**Appendix 1**

**In event of a pupil being absent**

1. Pupil absence line will be checked for message from parent/carer.
2. If no message has been left, administrative staff will attempt to make contact on first day of absence.
3. As soon as a reason is given this will be entered onto the electronic register.
4. For children whose attendance falls below 90% the AO will be contacted to carry out a home visit.

**In the event of a pupil being late**

1. Pupils arriving in school after 8.55 are late; reasons for lateness are recorded by parent/carer in the late book held at main reception. Administrative staff will enter the reasons into the electronic register and use the L code.
2. Pupils arriving after register is closed at 9.30 a.m. will do the same; the administrative officer will use the U code.
3. The attendance and welfare panel meet monthly and discuss any children with 10 or more late marks.
4. If no satisfactory reason has been given a letter will be sent out to the parent/carer highlighting the problem and asking for their support.
5. Continued lateness will result in the parent/carer being invited in to discuss the matter at the subsequent panel meeting.