



## POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE

### Introduction

Lea Frances Olive Anderson CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore regular school attendance. To this end the School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that may impede full attendance are acted upon as quickly as possible.

### Aims

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with National Curriculum regulations.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.

Many pupils and their parents will need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

- Situations may exist beyond the control of pupils and/ parents which the school needs to address in partnership with external agencies.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer groups and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

### Expectations

**We expect the following from all our pupils:**

- That they attend school regularly. That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.

**We expect the following from parents:** (See Home School Agreement)

- To encourage your children to attend school.
- To ensure that you contact school as soon as possible as is reasonably practical whenever your child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that your children arrive at school well prepared for the day.
- Please contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep your child away from school.

## **Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the pupil or their parent, unless there is a safeguarding concern).
- We will take steps through rewards to encourage good attendance.
- A quality education.

## **Encouraging Attendance Through Rewards:**

We encourage attendance in all or some of the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 10 minutes of the start of session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.
- A certificate for 100% attendance for each seasonal term.
- A certificate for 100% attendance of the whole class for the week.

## **Responding to non-attendance**

**When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond as follows:**

- Registers will be closed at 9.20 am, for pupils arriving after this time, a half day absence is recorded.
- If school has not been notified about an absence, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by text and then if we have not had a response by telephone
- Where there is no response further efforts will be made to contact the family, or the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) may be contacted if deemed appropriate or there are causes for concern.
- In continued non-attendance, the case will be discussed with the EWO for the school and further action planned. This may in appropriate cases, result in a referral to the Education Welfare Services (EWS).
- After 10 days, unless other action is planned, the parents will be invited by the appropriate staff to attend a meeting at school. This meeting will include staff members, EWO, parent and pupil, and will aim to identify and solve the problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school.

If there is no improvement, then the case will be discussed again with the EWO with a view to a formal referral being made to the EWS, if one has not been made at an earlier stage. If a referral had already been made then the case will be reviewed and the meeting used to plan further action.

## Reintegration

- The return to school for a pupil after a long term absence may require special planning. E.g. It may be appropriate to establish a Pastoral Support Programme.
- The class teacher with guidance from the Headteacher will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.

## Responsibilities

### **The Headteacher/Senior Administrator will:**

- Oversee the whole policy.
- Report to governors on attendance figures.
- Oversee the work of administrative staff.
- Produce attendance profile for the whole school.
- Liaise with EWO.

### **Class Teacher:**

- To complete registers accurately and on time. (See Appendix 1)
- Inform Admin to follow-up immediately any unexplained non-attendance by contacting parents.
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.

### **Parents:**

- Contact with school on first day of absence or as soon as possible.
- Support for general attendance.

**Education Welfare Service: This is now a bought in service, at FOA we will seek support if required.**

- Liaise with Headteacher.
- Home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- Group work if necessary.
- Undertake Legal proceedings on behalf of the LA where appropriate.
- Accept referrals, initiate contact with parents of carers and undertake assessments.
- Plan and review casework.
- Provide feedback for schools.

- Strategic/policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance, the employment of young people involved in performing.

**Admin:**

Collate and enter data base attendance figures.

**Term-time holiday:**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Fixed penalty notices may be used by the school.

**Review:**

This policy was reviewed in March 2017. It was agreed by the Pupil and Staffing Committee April 2017. It will be reviewed in the **Spring Term 2019** or earlier if necessary.

Signed ..... Date..... Chairman of Governors

Signed ..... Date ..... Headteacher

**Appendix 1**

## GUIDANCE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

### Good Practice

Under Section 7 of the Education act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities...

### The Importance of Registration:

- A class attendance register will be kept on which, at the **BEGINNING** of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. Registers should be collected from and returned to the school office, within 10 minutes of the start of session.
- Manuscript registers must be kept in ink and corrections must be made in such a way that the original entry and correction are both clearly distinguishable.
- Authorised absences should be entered with the symbol for categorising the absence.
- **Only the school**, in the context of the law **can approve absence**, not parents. If a class teacher does not accept the explanation offered for absence as a valid reason, then the matter must be referred to the Headteacher.
- Emerging patterns of authorised absence will be reported to the Bursar, who then discusses with the Headteacher.
- Reasons for absence should be entered in the register by the appropriate code.

### Authorised or Unauthorised Absence:

**Authorised absence** is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

All other absences must be regarded as **unauthorised**.

The following are acceptable reasons for authorising absences.

Illness.

- Family bereavements - (time limited).
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available.
- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion until removed from school or re-instated.
- **Family Holidays:** Parents should not take pupils on holiday during school term though schools are able to exercise the discretion in very exceptional circumstances.

The following are classed as present for statistical information and must be code marked.

- Field trips and educational visits both in this country and overseas.
- Pupils receiving approved education off site e.g. those receiving specialist support or those in receipt of home tuition but remaining on the roll of the school.

Absences will not be authorised under the following circumstances.

- Shopping trips.
- Minding the house or looking after siblings
- Lateness if registration is missed without explanation.
- Medical appointments that cannot be verified.
- No reason given.
- School staff feel the note is not genuine or valid.

Unusual circumstances may arise that lead to a young person being absent from school. It is for the Headteacher to decide whether the explanation offered is reasonable. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents should be considered. Further advice is available on the DfE website.

**Lateness:**

- Schools should actively discourage late arrival by challenging parents of children who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.
- Where a pupil arrives after register closure without good reason, they should be marked with an unauthorised absence and the letter L in blue or black to indicate that they are on site.
- It is the responsibility of both parents and pupils to ensure that pupils arrive in school before the bell at 8.55am. The school gates are open at 8.45am to encourage this.