

Sheringham Woodfields School

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Registered Charity: Friends of Sheringham Woodfields School - 1127142

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by SMT: 8 th Sept 2017	Approved by Staff: 22 nd Sept 2017	Approved by Governors: Autumn 2017
Next Review date: Autumn 2019	Person(s) responsible for review: Assistant Head / SBM	

Purpose:

Our close work with families and carers enables the school to achieve an environment which enables and encourages all members of our community to reach out for excellence. For our children and young people to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and we want to work with families and carers to ensure that wherever possible pupils should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

The complex and diverse needs of pupils can make them more vulnerable to illness and infection and we also realise that attending school full time may be neither realistic nor possible.

Why regular attendance is so important:

Any absence affects children and young people and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence may affect teaching routines. Regular attendance at school is a legal responsibility and we want to share this responsibility with families and carers.

To help families and carers we will:

- Provide and discuss information about their child's attendance at the Annual EHCP Review, and at the end of each school term. We want to make it a simple system which will easily show how well a child/young person is doing.

% attendance	Days missed per year	Impact
100%	0	Well done You should expect good progress and learning
95%	9.5	
90%	19.5	
85%	28.5	Your child will be progressing but the missed lessons will slow their progress. The school may be in touch to see how we can support you.
80%	38	
75%	45.6	
70% or below	57 +	Your child's learning will be less than it could have been. The school will be in touch to offer support

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. This clear, visual system will allow us all to monitor and encourage good attendance at school and work together to make improvements where necessary. The school Assistant Head will contact families whose child falls within the amber and red classifications.

Authorised or unauthorised absence:

Every half-day absence from school will be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are recorded as mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence may look like this:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to be included in registration
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- The school not being informed when a pupil is absent

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. We know that for some pupils this is understandable, a hospital stay or a long term illness may be the cause, however absence at this level does harm a child's educational prospects and we need parent's full support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

We have procedures and systems in place to track and improve attendance as we believe that prolonged absence will have a negative impact on a pupil's well being, progress and achievement.

Absence Procedures:

We ask parents or carers to:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence giving a reason

If a pupil is absent we will:

- Telephone or text families /carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them and record this
- Contact families/carers if there is absence of more than 10 consecutive days or more than 6 separate absences over a school term to see if we can help in any way
- Contact families/carers if their son/daughter is absent for more than 15 days or 10 separate occasions during a term to arrange a meeting to discuss the absence

The Attendance Improvement Officer:

If attendance does not improve, the school may refer a pupil to the Pupil Attendance & Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

Punctuality:

We feel it is vital to have a punctual, structured start to the day to settle our pupils quickly. The school day starts at **8.45am** and we aim for all our pupils to be in school by **9.00am** whether they are on school transport or brought to school by family or friends.

Holidays during Term Time:

The government has reviewed holiday and leave entitlement of children in education. This is the current stance in connection with leave.

Parents are required to ensure that their children attend school regularly. There is however, a discretionary power to allow leave of absence for the purpose of annual family holidays in exceptional circumstances during term time. This is not an entitlement and purely at the discretion of the Headteacher. Schools will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a student's education or if the absences are during school exam periods.

Parents should consider very seriously how the absences will affect their child's education. National statistics show 10 days absence in any academic year* does have a negative effect on progress and achievement.

*academic year = school year from September to July

To be read in conjunction with:

Safeguarding policy

Long term sickness policy