



Shawlands Primary School Policy

**Attendance and Punctuality Policy
REVIEWED ANNUALLY
(SPRING 2017)**

Introduced: Spring 2016

Written by L McClure on:

Signed.....

Approved by the Governing Body on:

Signed.....



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

The staff and Governors at Shawlands Primary School are committed to promoting a culture of high expectation, achievement and excellence. Good attendance is crucial if students are to take advantage of the opportunities available to them and complete a successful journey through their time at our school and as they move on into higher education or the world of work.

All of our school stakeholders need to work in partnership with relevant parties to ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities in our aim to promote high standards of attendance and punctuality.

The overall aim for all children should be for 100% attendance therefore any absence should only be for unavoidable and genuine reasons. If an absence is for a medical appointment, children should return to school after the appointment if at all possible.

Registration is a legal requirement that has to be taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions; this enables us to:

- **Monitor attendance regularly**
- **Evaluate information and set targets/tackle areas of concern as early as possible**
- **Target absence, punctuality and truancy and communicate with pupils and parents about expectations**
- **Have the ability to publicise the above data within our schools**
- **Have the ability to give a clear and accurate picture to parents, carers and guardians**
- **Have the ability to encourage and reward good attendance**

Why Regular Attendance is important

Any absence, including family holidays, affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence can disrupt the learning of others as they try to catch up with skills that have been taught in their absence, it can also have a de-motivating effect on individuals if they are unable to access parts of the curriculum following absences.

Parental Responsibility

Parents/Carers

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of parents and permitting absence from school, without a valid and significant reason, is an offence that may result in prosecution. All of our family of schools will seek to build on partnerships with parents by informing them about concerns at an early stage.

All schools operate a 'First Day Contact' procedure and expect parents to communicate the reasons for a child's absence at the beginning of the first day of absence. If there is no communication from home, parents will be contacted by school (usually) by text message at first and then by telephone. The school will have a dedicated absence line so that you can leave a message with details of your child, class and their reason for absence. Where possible, please give an indication to the likely date of return.

Appointments for visits to doctors, dentist etc should, wherever possible, be made out of school hours. Parents are asked to provide a copy of all medical appointment cards/letters for appointments made during the school day. These should be taken to the school office when collecting your child or, ideally, before.

Shawlands Primary – First Day Contact Procedures

This is crucial in our efforts to raise the attendance profile of our school. A 'First Day of Absence' system is operated to communicate quickly and effectively with parents and carers. School staff make contact with home on a daily basis. In cases where parents have no contact telephone number, school communicates with home by letter to establish contact and collect the required information. From May 2014, all contact with home is recorded and monitored by class teachers and/or the Senior Leadership Team. Where leaders are concerned about a child's reason for absence or the welfare of pupils /families the Head of School or Parent link worker or EWO may visit the home.

Attendance data is provided to Governors at their termly meetings to support the monitoring of attendance.

Teaching staff make calls to families in relation to any issues concerning children. The parent support worker is responsible for making daily calls with regard to attendance to parents and carers and for recording absence correctly on the SIMS system for our school.

Governors Monitoring

The Safeguarding Governor will work alongside office staff, the SLT and the parent support worker to ensure that attendance systems are effective. The parent support worker is in an ideal role to monitor the overall situation in relation to attendance, therefore her responsibilities include monitoring the overall effectiveness of school attendance procedures.

The Attendance Officer and the Head Teacher meet on a regular basis with the designated Education Welfare Officer to:

- Organise attendance meetings with parents
- Make referrals to the schools Learning Mentor / PSA as appropriate to support the raising of attendance for a nominated child / children.
- Working with the LA team in organising 'Attendance Sweeps'
- Attend meetings relating to attendance/punctuality as required

The governing body will;

- Ensure that the legal requirements for registration are complied with
- Review the school attendance policy on an annual basis
- Have input into the school attendance targets
- Receive reports and statistics at least termly
- Support the need for good attendance

Education Welfare Officers

The Education Welfare Officers will work alongside school staff to address pupil related issues that may be affecting their attendance at school. When a child is referred to Education Welfare, the officers will work within Local Authority guidelines to address the issues. Following a consultation with parents it may be felt that an Enforcement Procedure is necessary, this procedure is:

- Week 1 Parents invited to a School Attendance Panel
- Week 5 EWO home visit
- Week 10 LA Attendance Panel meeting
- Week 14 Notice of intention to prosecute
- Week 16 Court Summons

In the unlikely event a child is excluded from school, the EWO may work with the child and family to support reintegration.

Procedures

Attendance checks take place regularly and senior leaders take snapshots of information every half-term. When a child's attendance begins to be a concern, parents will be informed and subsequently become involved as outlined below:

Step 1: Below 95% attendance: First letter home

This is to inform parents of potential concerns and to ask for co-operation in trying to improve their child's attendance

Step 2: Below 90%: Second letter home or Below 95% and no improvement since last letter.

At this point parents will be invited into school to discuss issues relating to their child's attendance. At this meeting:

- SLT and support team will offer any relevant support or guidance to the family
- Set a clear target for improvement (and monitor in the following period)
- Make expectations clear
- Share a copy of the school policy

At this point parents will be asked to provide medical evidence for any future absence from school.

Letters may also be sent out (at the end of each half-term) for persistent lateness. Our doors open at 8.45am (EYFS) and 8.50am (Y1-Y6) and registration is taken at 9.00am. Pupils are deemed to be late at 9.05am and their late mark is recorded. Children arriving after 9.30am (without a medical reason) are marked as an unauthorised absence. We will send out letters, arrange meetings, set targets and, in the case of continued punctuality issues, seek EWO advice and consider issuing fines.

Holiday/absence requests

All requests for leave must be documented on a school request form. Parents should share details about the request and give any special circumstances than explain the need to take your child out of school. As policies on leave of absence are quite strict, please be aware that holidays taken for cost purposes or because of the lack of parental leave from work commitments in school holiday periods are not viable reasons for approval.

Holidays and special events will be unauthorised unless there is a significant reason why the child must miss education on that day/those dates.

Fining

The school does not wish to fine parents for holidays but, as we have to demonstrate a commitment to promoting good attendance we may fine in the following scenarios:

- A child will miss more than 10 days (in the academic year)
- A child will be absent from Y2 or Y6 during the month of May
- The taken holiday (when off set against the previous 12 months attendance record) means that a child's attendance for the 12 month period is guaranteed to be below 95%

Nature of Absence	Notes	Authorised/Unauthorised
Illness	Valid explanation/medical evidence.	Authorised
	Doubts about validity of explanation	Unauthorised
Medical/Dental appointments	Confirmed by parent via note appointment card etc	Authorised
Shopping/moving house during school hours	These are not valid reasons for absence	Unauthorised
Special occasions	Birthdays etc	Unauthorised
Family bereavements	School can offer support to pupils at such times.	Authorised
Family Holidays	Up to two weeks in any academic year along with contextual reasons <i>For example- a transfer from another school with different holiday patterns.</i>	Approved (in exceptional cases) or unauthorised absence
	More than two weeks Existing attendance issues	Unauthorised Unauthorised
Traveller children	If school is satisfied that a family has temporarily migrated with the intention of returning. Any other absence to be treated in same way as other students.	Authorised
Off-site activities	Educational visits, approved sporting activities etc	Present – mark given (Approval must be documented for non-educational visit leave)
Excluded students	If a Parent or Carer continues to keep a child off school after the exclusion period.	Unauthorised
Children at Referral Units or educated off site	Normally on roll at PRU. If arrangements are made for dual registration.	The designated mark is given if they attend the partner setting

This policy is available to view at:

<http://www.shawlandsprimaryschool.co.uk/policies>

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