

# West Melton Primary School



## Attendance Policy

**Reviewed November 2015**

**Date approved by Governing Body:**

**Review Date:**

**K Gaunt**

## **POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY 2015**

At West Melton Primary school, we believe that children can only learn effectively and reach their full potential if they attend school regularly. Therefore it is also important, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences, school places great emphasis on this in its communication with parents.

### **OUR AIM**

To work in partnership to:

- Support students and/or all parents/carers to address situations that may impact on attendance and the support they require both from school and external agencies to ensure that the best possible levels of attendance can be achieved.
- Ensure that all students have the opportunity to attend school feeling safe and secure.
- Remove/minimise the barrier to poor attendance and the resulting impact on the student's life chances.
- Ensure that all statutory guidance for attendance is in place and is clearly understood by the appropriate stakeholders.
- Ensure that attendance is a high priority for all stakeholders and that in promoting high levels of attendance the connection between excellent attendance and high achievement is embedded in all practice

### **Communication**

Information on lateness, illness and absence will be given to parents on the school website and letters to parents. These highlight the importance of being at school on time and notifying school if their child is absent for any reason.

During the pre-school parents meetings held for the parents of children about to enter the Foundation Stage, the importance of regular

attendance will be discussed and explained. This talk also includes parents and children arriving at school on time so that each child can be given the best possible start to each school day. Being picked up on time is also stressed, especially for young children who can be very upset if they are the only ones left.

Parents are asked to share any worries their child might have in school. Sometimes little things upset children, which may lead to them being unhappy, and not wanting to come to school. Parents need to be aware of this.

Children are also admitted to school at various times of the year, and into various year groups. When this happens, the importance of regular attendance is always highlighted along with other school routines.

## **Absence**

Authorised and unauthorised absences are explained to parents. All parents are asked to contact school on the first day if their child is absent. This can be done by telephoning or sending in a note with a sibling or in their learning logs. Parents can also call into school to see the class teacher to explain an absence. A note of notified absences is kept on the child's register sheet for the week of the absence. If school is not notified of the reason for absence the Education Welfare Officer will make a home visit.

## **Concerns regarding absences**

If school is concerned about the absence of a child a letter will be sent home via first class post. If the absences continue and attendance falls below 90% the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who will contact the parents and arrange a meeting in school to discuss the absence. If the absence continues then Fast Track to Attendance procedures will be instigated and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.

## Lates

If a child is regularly late (arrival after 8.45 am) for school more than 10 times in a half term then the parent/guardian is contacted by letter. If this persists then the school registers a concern with the Education Welfare Officer who will contact parents.

## Holidays

The Department of Education (DfE) has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 governing requests for holidays in term time.

**From 1 September 2013, the new law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday in term time. Head teachers may not grant any holidays or other absences during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

If a parent wishes to take a pupil out of school during term time they must complete a form with details of the exceptional circumstances and provide any necessary evidence to back this up. This will go to the attendance panel and a parent will receive notification if the absence is authorised or not. A reason will be provided if the absence is unauthorised.

Parents can receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday in term time without the consent of school. From 1 September these Penalty Notices cost £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 per child per parent if paid between 22 and 28 days.

## Procedures

The attendance list is monitored weekly and any patterns of absence noted and discussed with the Education Welfare Officer. All correspondence will be kept in the Attendance file. The Headteacher has the authority to apply for a parental fixed term penalty notice if absences are not addressed and persist at under 90%.

On the first day of absence, if parents have not rung in to give an explanation, then school will ring and record the reason given. All reasons given for absence are recorded to see if there is a pattern.

### Intervention of Persistent Absence

1. Absence noted by class teacher and sent to office
2. Catherine to ring parents and record reason and predicted return date
3. If pupil not back in school by predicted date, Catherine to ring again
4. EWO to be informed at weekly meetings with Kate and Catherine of persistent absence
5. Attendance will continue to be monitored.
6. Letter 1 issued to inform/remind parents that they are being monitored for the next 6 weeks (excluding any holidays)
7. Letter 2 issued to invite parents to come in to school and work with us to improve attendance before informing EWO if attendance doesn't improve ( a further 6 weeks excluding any holidays)
8. EWO informed and family to be added to the EWO case load.
9. EWO to monitor and support
10. Letter 3 - warning of parents being taken to Attendance Panel if attendance still deteriorates.

### Truancy

All the staff are concerned about children's regular attendance, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. We are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. Although it is a very rare occurrence, if there is a concern that a child might be truanting then action is taken straight away.

If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified, who then contacts the parent. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school so that reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and hopefully resolved.

In the event of not being able to talk to the parent then the Headteacher talks to the child concerned to find out if there are any worries or problems in school that might make that child not want to attend. If there are, then these are discussed with the Inclusion Manager and/or Class Teacher and appropriate action is taken.

## Rewards

The class with the highest attendance will be rewarded with Cheeky monkey and an hours free time and a certificate. Each class has their attendance displayed on their classroom door. On the main entrance is the attendance for the whole school that week.

Each term certificates for 100% attendance and those greater than 95% will be awarded.