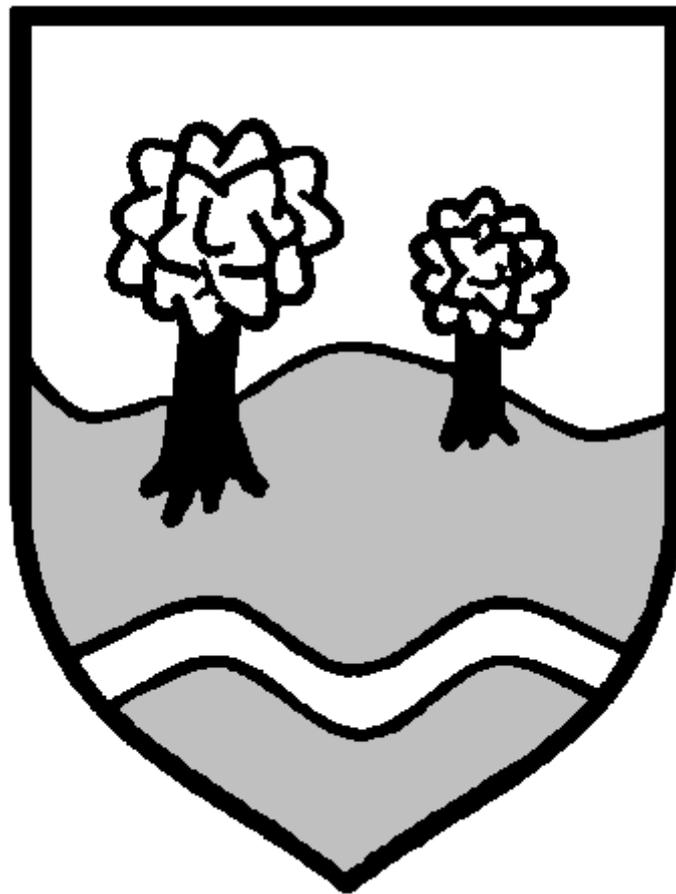


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POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Principles

- Regular and full time attendance is essential if children and young people are to benefit fully from their school life
- It is important that children learn the importance of being punctual as part of their preparation for adult life
- It is the parents responsibility to contact the school on the first day of an absence
- The school and parents should work together in order to achieve high standards of attendance and punctuality

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to

- set out the ways by which attendance and punctuality are managed by the school
- clarify the role of the parents/carer

The School will:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority
- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and their presence is valued
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality using newsletters and other communications to parents
- Encourage parents to fully support the policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education
- Encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored and absences are followed up promptly
- Communicate effectively with other agencies (Health, Social Services etc)

- Meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence
- Ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality
- Ensure information is available for Governors and parents
- Ensure good liaison where a change of school occurs
- Develop incentives for good attendance and punctuality
- Share good practice with other schools
- Have procedures in place to help children settle in after a long absence

Strategies to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Attendance and Punctuality

- All new parents are introduced to the Policy and information on attendance in the School Prospectus
- An attendance leaflet is distributed to all parents
- The newsletter is used as a vehicle to promote this aspect of school life and serves as a reminder
- Individual parents are approached where there is concern about their child's attendance or punctuality
- Where children are being monitored for attendance and/or punctuality, parents will receive regular communication in writing regarding the attendance percentages relating to their children
- Where concerns continue, the CAF process may be instigated
- Class teachers maintain and promote a set of class rules which refer to punctuality and readiness for work

We expect the parent to:

- Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address
- Notify the school when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of the absence
- Telephone the school after the first day of absence to advise the school if the absence is continuing
- In cases of lengthy absence, keep the school well informed so that work can be sent home in certain cases and in order for the school to be prepared for the child's return

- Provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen
- Provide a note when the child returns from an absence due to sickness. This should be on the first day of the child's return to school
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child

Lateness after 9.30 am is classed an unauthorised absence unless it is for a medical appointment or a reason is provided which can be authorised by the Head Teacher.

An absence will be classified as unauthorised when:

- A child is kept off school because a parent is ill
- A child is absent because a sibling is ill
- The parent cannot get the child to school
- The child is taken on a shopping trip
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat
- A child is absent due to family work patterns
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home
- A child is more than half an hour late without a satisfactory explanation

Each child's unauthorised absences (including unauthorised holiday absences) will be noted and recorded on an annual report to parents.

It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences to parents in the annual Governors Report and to the Department for Education.

Parents have a responsibility to telephone the school if their child is ill. If a child needs to be absent for a medical appointment a note must be received by the class teacher before the appointment. When a child returns from a period of absence due to a sickness, a note must be provided. The class teacher dates and signs all notes in order to complete the weekly absence report.

The school will telephone the child's home to enquire about an absence if the parent has not contacted the school on the first day of absence.

The school has an absence target of 96%. Where a child's attendance falls below this in any half term, a letter will be sent to the child's parents. Further trigger points, 92% and 89% will also result in communication with parents. Where a child's attendance falls below 85% despite interventions, a referral will be made to the ACE Statutory Service.

Leave of Absence

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013:

- Head teachers **shall not grant any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Punctuality

The school day begins at 8.55 a.m. when the register will be taken at 9am. Children arriving after 9 a.m. should report to the school office.

Parents of children who persistently arrive late will be approached and reminded of these times and their obligation to comply. It will be explained that the lateness not only interrupts their child's education but also that of others in the class.

If a child arrives more than half an hour late, with no reason given by their parent, this will constitute an unauthorised absence.

If parents know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know. Where a child arrives after registers close (9.30am), without notice, an unauthorised absence will be recorded.

If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, parents will be asked to speak to the Head Teacher to explain the lateness and to ensure that punctuality is maintained. In rare circumstances where the school is made aware of a situation, an arrangement allowing a degree of flexibility can be agreed with the Head Teacher.

Attendance and lateness will be monitored regularly. Letters will be sent on a termly basis to the parents of children for whom attendance or lateness is an issue. This will be accompanied by a record of attendance.

Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer and/or Social Services where relevant.

Medical Appointments

Parents must sign their child(ren) out and back in again when attending appointments during the school day.

If a child has an appointment in a morning or afternoon session and does not attend school for the other session, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless it has been agreed with the Head teacher.

Monitoring

The Head teacher will keep the Governors informed about attendance matters.

A Governors sub-committee will make decisions about authorising holidays.

All staff will be expected to comply with the policy and any issues will be discussed at staff meetings.

Policy date: September 2013

Review date: December 2014 ✓

Signed _____ Head Teacher

Signed _____ Chair of Governors