

# Shoeburyness High School

A member of Southend East Community Academy Trust



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy – November 2018

**Status** : Recommended

**Next revision due** : November 2019

**Review and monitor by** : Senior Middle Leader (Attendance)

**Agreed by** Local Governing Body

**Signed by Chair  
of Local Governing Body:**

## **1. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE**

Good attendance is a foundation for academic achievement and it underpins all aspects of personal development. It establishes a responsible attitude towards the opportunities available in school and in further education and it is the basis for the world of work. Shoeburyness High School is committed to providing a full and effective educational opportunity for all pupils. We will organise and do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils.

Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as quickly as possible. Poor attendance should be viewed as a symptom that may signal that the pupil needs support and academic, personal or home factors may need to be addressed. Pupils will receive regular reviews about their progress through mentoring. It is the policy of the school to celebrate success. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

Our school will actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our pupils. We will also consistently reward good attendance in conjunction with a positive Attitude to Learning.

All staff must be actively engaged in raising attendance levels. This will involve fostering good relationships between pupils and staff, being aware of the causes of poor attendance and ensuring that the curriculum is relevant and appropriate.

We will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents play a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home school links so that we can work together whenever there is concern about attendance. Similarly, pupils and parents should receive praise and encouragement when things are going well.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance, we will work in partnership with the Child, Family and Early Intervention team, parents and pupils to resolve the problems as quickly and effectively as possible. We will adopt a focused approach, using clear targets or integration strategies to enable the pupil to return to full attendance.

## **3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The school aims to achieve a 96% or above attendance rate for all pupils.

- Staff will use the Web Folder registers for a.m. and p.m. registration and for each teaching session.
- We will encourage parents to inform us of any impending absence or immediate absence by telephone.
- All unauthorised absence will be followed up with a text message or by telephone, using a print out each day.
- We will contact parents not on the telephone, by letter, where reasons for absence are unknown.
- We will promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence.
- We will reward good and improved attendance.
- We will utilise the services of the Attendance Officers in terms of contacting the home, returning the pupil to school and maintaining a follow up service in the case of persistent truancy.
- We will regularly review, evaluate and where necessary improve procedures. This will be carried out by Senior Staff and Governors.
- We will include articles in the Thorpe Bay Oracle and the Keeping in Touch newsletter which regularly inform parents about attendance issues.
- We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued, sending a clear message that if a pupil is absent, he/she is missed. We shall use re-integration programmes to support poor attendees.
- We will have procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.
- We will adhere to the Code of Conduct under the Provision of the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2004 (see Appendix 3)

#### **4. CONSULTATION GROUP**

- Governors of Shoeburyness High School
- Staff, students and parents of Shoeburyness High School
- Local Authority Attendance Team who have statutory duties in relation to school attendance
- Other schools within the locality as we aim to work closely with them
- Various external agencies

#### **5. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

- Education of pupils with medical needs
- Admissions
- Child Protection (safeguarding children)
- Detention

- Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

## **6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership team, in consultation with the staff, will undertake systematic monitoring and, as a result, conduct regular reviews of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and procedures in order to evaluate them to ensure that the operation is effective, fair and consistent. The Governing Body will review this policy and procedures on a regular basis and the impact it has on school attendance.

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- In addition to the Local Authority and DfE (Department for Education and Skills) the governing body will establish, in consultation with the Headteacher, staff, pupils and parents, the policy for the promotion of attendance and punctuality and keep it under regular review. It will ensure that it is communicated to pupils and parents, is non-discriminatory and the school's expectations about pupil attendance and punctuality are clear. Governors will support the school in maintaining high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for the school's policy and procedures, and may delegate aspects of its day to day implementation and management to a designated member of the school's leadership team. Support for staff faced with challenging behaviour is also an important responsibility of the Headteacher
- All staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff in the implementation of the policy is essential. Staff have a key role in advising the principal on the effectiveness of the policy and procedures. They also have responsibility, with the support of the school leadership team, for implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently.
- The Governing Body, Headteacher and staff will ensure there is no differential application of the policy and procedures on any grounds, particularly ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. They will also ensure that the concerns of pupils are listened to and appropriately addressed.
- Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance and punctuality of their child both inside and outside the school. They will be encouraged to work in partnership with the school to assist the school in maintaining high standards of attendance and punctuality and will have the opportunity to

raise with the school any issues arising from the operation of the policy.

- Pupils will be expected to take responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality and will be made fully aware of the school policy, procedure and expectations.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **I ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES FOR TUTORS**

- a) Learning Tutors to register pupils during the a.m. slot using the Webfolder system.
- b) Pupils who arrive without notes must be questioned. Pupils who fail to bring a note after a reminder must be sent to the Year Manager or Attendance Officer. This will also apply to any pupil where the note may seem to be doubtful.
- c) Learning Tutors will ensure that pupils record EACH WEEK their attendance in their planners.
- d) Learning Tutors should encourage pupils to notify the school ON THE FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE.
- e) Learning Tutors to set individual targets for pupils based on any information from the previous term.
- f) Each week the percentage attendance for each form will be printed on the bulletin.
- g) Early intervention makes a significant difference. If a pupil's attendance deteriorates, tutors should initially discuss this with the pupil and monitor the situation. Ongoing concerns should be referred to the Year Manager / Attendance Officer.

It is really important that we all maintain our efforts to raise the levels of attendance. Studies show that if pupils know that absence or truancy will be followed up, this reduces the amount of lost time. Positive reinforcement of good attendance, encouragement and praise for improvement, will raise attendance rates if we are consistent.

## ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

### HOW MUCH SCHOOLING HAVE YOU MISSED?

**100% ATTENDANCE MEANS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.  
WELL DONE!**

99% = 2 days missed of the school year (4 sessions missed)

98% = 4 days missed of the school year (8 sessions missed)

97% = 6 days missed of the school year (over 1 school week)

96% = 8 days missed of the school year (16 sessions missed)

95% = 10 days missed of the school year (2 school weeks)

94% = 12 days missed of the school year (24 sessions missed)

93% = 14 days missed of the school year (28 sessions missed)

92% = 16 days missed of the school year (over 3 school weeks)

91% = 18 days missed of the school year (36 sessions missed)

**90% = 20 days missed of the school year (4 school weeks)**

89% = 22 days missed of the school year (44 sessions missed)

88% = 24 days missed of the school year (48 sessions missed)

87% = 26 days missed of the school year (over 5 school weeks)

86% = 28 days missed of the school year (56 sessions missed)

85% = 30 days missed of the school year (6 school weeks)

**70%** = 1½ days missed per week **60%** = 2 days missed per week

= 12 weeks missed per year = almost 4 months

= almost a whole term

**50%** = 2½ days missed per week **40%** = 3 days missed per week

= ½ a school year (19 weeks) = over ½ a school year

## **II SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH ATTENDANCE PROBLEMS**

- a) Pupils will be monitored by the Learning Tutor and Attendance team if attendance falls below 95%. The pupil will be monitored and given a target and time limit for improvement.
- b) If no improvement is shown the parent will be contacted by telephone or letter or an invitation will be offered to discuss the situation in school.
- c) Joint strategies may be devised between parents, pupils, the Attendance team and staff. A time limit and targets will be set for improvement.
- d) Referrals will be made where appropriate to the Educational Psychologist, Social Services, Home Tuition or other agencies and the completion of an EHA (Early Help Assessment) form should be carried out.
- e) Special programmes may be negotiated with pupils experiencing attendance problems using curriculum support, Tutors, Year Managers, Progress Leaders or Attendance Lead.
- f) Children with long term illnesses or with emotional problems, including school phobia, will be supported by the School. Contact with parents and the pupil will be maintained, either directly, or in liaison with the appropriate agencies. As far as is possible, work will be set for the pupil and sent home or passed on to the home tuition service.
- g) The use of work experience and links with the College may be explored for older pupils.
- h) Children Missing Education (CME) will be referred to the Local Authority in accordance with the DfE guidelines.

## **III ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES FOR YEAR MANAGERS/ PROGRESS LEADERS**

Year Managers and Progress Leaders have the responsibility for monitoring attendance within each year group and implementing procedures to improve attendance where necessary.

Information about attendance is contained in the pastoral folders held by all pastoral staff.

- a) A late detention system is in place, currently 10 minutes at the end of the school day supervised by the class teacher



period 4. Persistent lateness is followed up by the Year Managers/Attendance team who would contact home and issue a 30 minute detention.

- b) Certificates and badges are awarded for 100% attendance for the academic year. Names are displayed on school notice boards.
- c) Attendance is a regular agenda item for Tutor Teams and Progress Leader Meetings.
- d) Parents of poor attendees are contacted by tutors, Year Managers and the Attendance team and invited to discuss how the situation may be improved. Similarly meetings may take place and individual programmes devised as part of Pupil Education Plans.
- e) The reporting system shows

|                      |   |               |
|----------------------|---|---------------|
| Excellent            | = | 100% - 99%    |
| Very Good            | = | 98% - 97%     |
| Good                 | = | 96% - 95%     |
| Requires Improvement | = | 94% - 92%     |
| Poor                 | = | 91% and below |

The pupil's individual attendance is given alongside any unauthorised/late attendance. Attendance affected by medical problems or other circumstances is shown by the code M.

- f) Attendance receives a high profile in terms of Assembly and tutor time. Pupils monitor their own weekly attendance as part of the school rewards system.
- g) Unauthorised absence is checked weekly, parents are contacted where there is no explanation, either by telephone, letter or home visits.
- h) Pupils who have ongoing attendance problems may be referred to the special attendance group in their particular year group.

#### **IV ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES FOR OFFICE STAFF**

- a) The Attendance team will provide a daily printout of absence.
- b) The Attendance team will provide Year Managers with a printout of all post-registration truancy.
- c) There will be 'hot texting' of parents each day and the outcome will be recorded. A standard letter is sent to parents of pupils not on the phone. The Attendance Officers will make daily calls to pupils with complex problems or difficult home backgrounds.
- d) The attendance team will liaise with Local Authority Youth Offending Team to arrange home visits for those students whose parents have not contacted school regarding absence or responded to texts. They may also visit students who are persistent absentees who may benefit from such a visit.

Students with attendance requiring improvement are monitored closely. The attendance team implement various levels of intervention involving parental support.

- Level 1: involves an interview with parents and target set for improvement over a 4 week period.
  - Level 2: if level 1 is failed, involves the Local Authority and a further review period.
  - Level 3: if improvement is still not seen then the local authority carry out home visits and may refer for Early Help.
  
  - Panel meetings take place for students who continue to fail to demonstrate any improvement in attendance. A member of the school's governing body is required to attend this meeting. Panel meetings may recommend court action or fines for the parents or guardians.
- e) Where student absence reaches 10 days and all reasonable attempts to make contact with parents/carers have been unsuccessful then a Child Missing Education form is submitted to the local authority for further investigation.
- f) If the pupil's difficulties are not resolved at that meeting, then a formal referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Officer and formal intervention planned.
- g) If a pupil is returning to school from a protracted period of absence, an Individual Reintegration Programme will be planned. The IRP will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible.
- h) The Attendance team provides a weekly percentage for each tutor via the Bulletin to all staff. Each half term a printout of pupil attendance below 94% is made so that we can track levels of attendance and target intervention. Written records of all contacts and outcomes are kept and placed on file.
- i) The attendance team meet with the local authority (LA) on a fortnightly basis. At these meetings the school will provide a report on all students at Levels 1 or 2 and the interventions that have been put in place. The LA in turn will report on progress with level 3 students.

### **Strategies to promote good attendance throughout the school**

- Engaging lessons and a supportive climate are provided to encourage students to attend as often as possible.
- A school wide reward system is in place which promotes attendance coupled with a positive attitude to learning.
- Half termly, termly and annual prize draws reward students and parents for good attendance.

- Tutor to encourage pupils and parents to notify school on the first day of absence.
- Set individual targets for pupils, sometimes in conjunction with an attendance report.
- Attendance records kept electronically will be backed up with paper records, as we are obliged to fulfil legal requirements. The legal framework which is defined by numerous Education Acts make it an obligation for:
  - **Parents** to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, and to send them to school regularly once they are on register.
  - **LAs** to provide education and enforce attendance.
  - **School** to register attendance and notify the LA of absence from school.

## **V      REGISTERS**

School Registers are legal documents and should be marked with accuracy at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. Lesson attendance should also be marked at the beginning of each lesson. (Within the first ten minutes.)

An extract of the register is used to prove non-attendance when the Local Authority Service prosecutes parents in the Magistrate's Court. A case can be thrown out of court if the defendant/lawyer can prove the register is incorrect. Corrections should be made as soon as possible on the same day.

The register information is used by school administrative staff to contact parents about their absent children and if incorrect can result in the member of staff being verbally abused.

Class registers are of value with pupils on integration plans.

If there should be a fire in school, an inaccurately marked register could result in a life being lost.

## **NEW ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS**

| <b>CODE</b> | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>   | <b>MEANING</b>                      |
|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| /           | Present (am)   | Present                             |
| \           | Present (PM)   | Present                             |
| B           | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)  | Approved Education Activity         |
| C           | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised Absence                  |
| D           | Dual Registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)                         | Approved Education Activity         |
| E           | Excluded (no alternative provision made)   | Authorised Absence                  |
| F           | Extended Family Holiday (agreed)   | Authorised Absence                  |
| G           | Family Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in <u>excess</u> of agreement)             | Unauthorised Absence                |
| H           | Family Holiday Agreed  | Authorised Absence                  |
| I           | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)                                    | Authorised Absence                  |
| J           | Interview  | Approved Education Activity         |
| L           | Late (before registers closed)   | Present                             |
| M           | Medical/Dental appointments  | Authorised Absence                  |
| N           | No reason yet provided for absence   | Unauthorised Absence                |
| O           | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)                     | Unauthorised Absence                |
| P           | Approved sporting activity   | Approved Education Activity         |
| R           | Religious observance   | Authorised Absence                  |
| S           | Study Leave  | Authorised Absence                  |
| T           | Traveller Absence  | Authorised Absence                  |
| U           | Late (after registers closed)  | Unauthorised Absence                |
| V           | Educational visit or trip  | Approved Education Activity         |
| W           | Work Experience  | Approved Education Activity         |
| X           | Non-compulsory school age absence  | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y           | Exceptional circumstances  | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z           | Pupil not yet on roll  | Not counted in possible attendances |
| #           | School closed to pupils  | Not counted in possible attendances |

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **DEFINITIONS**

Our discussion, or referral within school, would be more effective if we all use the following terms and definitions about attendance problems and when checking attendance patterns:

- persistent absence:** missing more than 10% of possible attendance in any one term;
- intermittent absence:** missing days or half days in succeeding weeks, whether in a regular or irregular pattern, adding up to a considerable number of absences over a half-term or term;
- school refusal:** (a term often interchangeable with school phobia): a symptom of underlying psychological disorder, associated with anxiety, brought on, for example, by a change in circumstances, such as the loss of a parent or sibling, or a change of school;
- authorised absence:** absence for a valid reason - for example, illness, approved religious observances or a death in the family. (See criteria September 1992);
- unauthorised absence:** unjustified absence from school, for any period as a result of premeditated or spontaneous action on the part of the pupils, parents or both. This term includes parentally condoned absence. Unauthorised absence is often referred to as 'truancy'.
- internal truancy:** when a pupil who is already registered absents her/himself for a part of the whole of the session without leaving the school premises:
- absconding:** when a pupil leaves the school premises having been registered as present. (Sometimes referred to as post-registration truancy).

(Amended from Education Observed 13. Attendance at School. DES 1989)

There is now a considerable body of research on attendance related issues. The initial research featured psychological factors, followed by socio-economic reasons. During the 1980/90's research has focused on the influence of school itself as a factor which influences attendance rates. **There is a strong correlation between low attainment and poor attendance**, and a weaker one between persistent absenteeism and delinquency.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Unauthorised leave during Term Time**

Following amendments to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013, Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

If the decision is made not to authorise, a letter will be sent to the parent confirming this fact and that a penalty notice may be issued. If a holiday is then taken without authorisation, the school will complete a request to the Child and Family Early Intervention Service who will decide whether to issue the penalty notice. The current penalty notice stands at £60 rising to £120 (if not paid within 21 days) **to each parent for each child** taken out of school.

More information can be found on the school and Local Authority websites.