

SHIREHAMPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1** We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2** Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1** When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.
- 3.2** When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.

3.3 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact with the parent or guardian, by 10am at the latest, in order to check on the safety of the child. Initially this contact is made by text and then followed up with a phone call if there has still been no contact from the parents / carers.

4 Requests for leave of absence

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance, but normally this request will be granted.

4.2 There is no entitlement to holidays for children within term time. However the head teacher has discretion to grant up to 10 days absence where there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases the request for leave must be made well in advance and reasons given indicating why these are exceptional circumstances. The school will ensure that INSET days will take place either directly before or after a school holiday period and encourage parents / carers to take holidays during this extended holiday period. The absence will only be authorised if attendance at school is above 90%

5 Long-term absence

5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, a letter will be sent home asking the parents or guardians to explain the absence. If a satisfactory reply is not received the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

6.2 The governors, supported by the EWO, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1.1** All the children who have 100 per cent attendance at the end of term 2, 4 and 6 will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are gift vouchers for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year.
- 7.1.2** The school has an attendance board to promote good attendance. Points are given to classes with 100% attendance, 97% or more and 94% or more. These are collated weekly and the class with the most points at the end of the term earns a reward.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1** The school sets attendance targets each year with the aim of reducing our absence total (authorised and unauthorised absences) every year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1** It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 9.2** The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3** The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.
- 9.4** Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for passing on concerns to the Learning Mentor. The Learning Mentor monitors attendance on a daily basis and raises any concerns with either the head teacher and/or appropriate outside agency ie Social Care or EWS (Education Welfare Service). If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, the Learning Mentor will contact the parents or guardian before liaising with the head teacher who will then request a meeting with parents / carers.
- 9.5** This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Date:

Review: