



Etruscan Primary School

Attendance Policy

Last Reviewed: Spring term 2016

Review Date: Spring Term 2017

Objectives

- To acknowledge the impact of non-school attendance on individual pupil's levels of achievement
- To acknowledge that non-attendance and patterns of poor attendance rather than unauthorised absence is the key issue.
- To establish the importance of punctuality in attending both school and lessons.
- To bring about positive change to existing trends and statistics.
- To ensure all stakeholders work to support and promote the importance of children attending school regularly.
- To inform and support families working to improve their children's attendance.
- To encourage parental responsibility through providing efficient ways in which parents can implement their responsibility for their child's attendance record.

Policy and Procedures.

We recognise that it is important that all schools follow the same procedure to ensure that the statutory duties are carried out by the Educational Welfare Officer, which supports appropriate action being taken when parents/carers fail to ensure good school attendance.

To further support the Attendance Policy, we:-

- Have clear registration procedures to encourage positive attitudes toward attendance and punctuality and to identify pupils at risk of meeting attendance targets.
- Work with parents/carers to support any of our families with any difficulties that may impact upon their child's attendance by enlisting partner agency support where appropriate, for example Education Welfare Officer, School Nurse.
- Support learning and positive attitudes to behaviour by investigating the barriers to good attendance through attendance clinics.
- Have developed supportive systems of sanctions and rewards.
- Undertake analysis of patterns of absence via regular register checks and half termly attendance reports which are reported to the IEB.
- Ask the parent/carer to ensure that up to date contact telephone numbers and any change of address is forwarded to the school office.
- Share common strategies and language to reinforce attendance policy in respect of key areas of concern, for example:-

Authorised and non-authorised attendance:

- Clearly differentiate between authorised and non-authorised attendance
- Authorise absence only when the reason (illness, bereavement, and religious observation) can be seen as a genuine explanation of the absence.

Attendance

Regular attendance at school is vital if children are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers. We aim for our whole school attendance and for the attendance of individual children to be above 96%. If a child's attendance drops below 96% the school may contact parents/ carers to discuss why and to agree strategies to raise attendance above 96%.

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.

The school and the Local Authority work together to ensure that parent/carers meet their responsibility.

Attendance issues are dealt with in the first instance by the school. If this does not lead to an improvement in attendance, it is followed by referral to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), who can provide an important link between school and families but who can also invoke statutory action to ensure regular attendance if necessary.

Punctuality

The KS2 gate and KS1 door are open from 8.35am. The Nursery and Reception doors open at 8.45. Registration is at 8.45am for KS1 and KS2 and at 8.50am for Nursery and Reception. Any child arriving at school after this time is late. The KS1 and KS2 school gates are locked promptly at 8:45am; any child arriving after this time must come to the school office to be marked as late.

The school keeps records of all late arrivals with names of late arrivals being entered into the "late book" which is kept in the School Office. Late arrivals are monitored weekly.

Our Home School Links Worker conducts daily punctuality / late gates. If a child is consistently late, parents are invited to attend a meeting to discuss punctuality with the Head of School and the Educational Welfare Officer.

If no improvement occurs an official referral the Education Welfare Officer is made and parent/carers may receive penalty notices / fines.

Recording Absence and Punctuality

Every half term the school is required to submit details of Persistent Absence to the Educational Welfare Officer. We are required to inform how many half days were missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence. Children are classed as Persistent Absentees if their attendance is below 90%. This is recorded as a percentage attendance and is used as an overall guide to the school's success in promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Leave of absence during term-time

As a school we aim to raise attainment and attendance to meet National requirements, therefore **we do not authorise any holidays for children during term-time under any circumstances.**

However if exceptional circumstances arise, parent/carers are asked to fill in a “leave of absence during term time” form. They will then be asked to attend a meeting see the Head of School and possibly the Education Welfare Officer. This meeting is held to:-

- Emphasise that a leave of absence will impact on achievement and will not be authorized.
- Advise families that pupils will be taken off roll after 20 school days of absence and would then need to re-apply for a place at this school, should a place still be available.

Families are advised of the above by letter following the meeting.

Monitoring Attendance

See Flow Chart (Appendix 1)

The Registration Process.

1. Class teachers are responsible for maintaining an accurate class attendance register although other adults may complete the register under the teacher's direction.
(e.g. Teaching Assistants).
2. Registers must be completed in blue or black ink (absence in red). Data from registers will be transferred to the school's information management system (SIMS) on a daily basis by clerical staff.
3. The attendance register is marked twice a day at the start of the morning and beginning of the afternoon. For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present, or absent. Absences will only be authorised by the school when a satisfactory explanation has been given by parents (e.g. illness). Explanation must be in person, or by telephone message on the first day of absence.
4. Correct codes for recording attendance and absence are set out in each register. Only the Home School Links Worker enters these codes.
5. Morning (am) is counted as one session and afternoon (pm) is counted as another session. Pupil attendance at school is 2 sessions per day.

Timetable of Registration.

| Nursery Reception | Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 |
|--|---|--|
| 8:50am Morning Registration 12.30pm Reception Afternoon Registration | 8:45am Morning Registration 12.25pm Afternoon Registration | 8:45am Morning Registration 1pm Lower KS2 Afternoon Registration 1.10pm Upper Key Stage 2 Afternoon Registration |

Our Head of School has the responsibility for monitoring attendance and highlighting concerns through regular review meetings with the Home/School Link Worker and EWO (Education Welfare Officer).

If there is marked improvement in attendance, then a letter of improvement will be sent to parents.

Rewards

Children who have 100% attendance and no lates have their names put into a draw to win a £10 voucher and a certificate each half term.

Children who have 100% attendance for the whole academic year receive an end of year treat and their names are put into a draw to win a £50 voucher.

The attendance of each class is displayed on our attendance monitor in the hall each week, to encourage competition. The class with the highest attendance receives a trophy and the DSs to keep for the week

Children receive a green (96% and above), amber (90%-95.99%), or red (below 90%) certificate each term to inform them and their parents/ carers about their attendance

Involvement of Education Welfare.

Once a formal referral to the EWO has been made, the following procedures will apply:

- Attendance meeting in school as well as a more formal meeting with the LA should no improvement be made.
- Home visits to parents to discuss any contributory factors which may be affecting attendance and possible solutions and support.
- Court action if attendance rate fails to improve, could result in fines and / or prison sentence for parents if the fine is not paid.
- Fixed penalty notice for non-attendance.

Fixed Penalty Fine

Two Levels

Level 3

- Penalty warning letters issued - which state that parent/carers have 20 days to improve attendance.
- During a 20 day period, Education Welfare Officer conducts a home visit or telephone contact takes place.
- May issue second warning letter – if no improvement a fine will be issued (£60 per child per parent)
- Parent/carer has 28 days to pay (£60 per parent) if not paid after 42 days the fine will double to £120 per parent.

If the fine is not paid the matter may proceed to court.

Level 4

- The matter would move to level 4 if previous fines haven't worked or if parents/carers have previous convictions for non-school attendance.
- Warning letters 1 and 2 are sent
- Attendance review meeting is held with the Education Welfare Officer, Head of School and parents/carers.
- Could move to PACE- (Police and Criminal Evidence). Parents/carers are invited to attend a meeting under caution and tape recorded.
- Proceed to court – carries a heavier fine and possible custodial sentence.

Action to implement and support this policy

Etruscan Primary School will therefore:-

- Ensure a common approach and language to ensure clarity and understanding for all stakeholders.
- Ensure that attendance is a regular feature on newsletters to parents and that the attendance policy is displayed on the school's website
- Ensure attendance is the responsibility of the Head of School with support from the Home School Links Worker and Education Welfare Officer. The Head of School will ensure that there is adequate record keeping within our school to ensure accurate and consistent identification of vulnerable children and families.
- Emphasise the importance of regular and sustained attendance by an early and consistent response to non-attendance and not authorising absence unless it clearly meets the statutory criteria.
- Clearly enforce responses to late arrival.

- Establish appropriate priorities for action i.e. when making first-day contact, target vulnerable children first, then children being monitored by the school and the Education Welfare Officer, then other pupils as necessary, taking account of individual needs
- Use all contact with parents to clarify and reinforce their responsibility to have their child in school and to contact the school when there is a genuine reason for non-attendance.
- Confirm the reason for refusing to authorise non-attendance/ leave in exceptional circumstances in writing to parents, warning them that if they take the child out of school without authorization for a period of 20 school days or longer, the child will be taken off roll and the parent/carers will have to reapply for their place on their return, should a place still be available.
- Use a system of rewards that recognise “improving” attendance in addition to recognition of good attendance, including sending letters to parents/ carers if their child’s attendance is improving
- Use of attendance colour code system.(please see following pages)
- Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of this policy (annually).

SUMMARY

- We recognise that regular attendance is crucial to pupils achieving their potential.
- Our key concern is non-attendance, rather than whether attendance is authorised or not.
- Our most effective response will be achieved by a common policy supported by a common language.
- Our reason for developing an attendance policy is to enable us to clarify and reinforce parents’/carers’ responsibility to have their child(ren) attend school regularly, or to inform the school when there is a genuine reason for non-attendance.
- This aim will be best achieved by working in partnership with parents and carers to maximise their children’s attendance.
- The impact of the policy to be evaluated through half termly attendance reports and an annual review of attendance and the attendance policy.

Policy to be reviewed annually.

Signed.....

M Johnstone

Executive Headteacher

Signed.....

Gini Cotton

Chair Federation Board

Date.....

School Absence Management – Escalation of Intervention

