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**Etruscan Primary School**

**Attendance Policy**

**Last Reviewed:** September 2023

**Review Date**: March 2025

**Next Review Date:** September 2025

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 (EWO), 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 termly attendance reports which are reported to the Board of Governors.
* 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 the attendance policy in respect of key areas of concern.

Authorised and non-authorised attendance:

* We clearly differentiate between authorised and non-authorised attendance
* We authorise absence only when the reason (illness, bereavement, and religious observation) can be seen as a genuine explanation of the absence.
* Evidence is required for any medical appointments, for example hospital or dentist
* If a child returns to school during the session from the appointment, they will be given the mark for the session

Persistent Absenteism

* Following DfE guidelines, the Persistent Absentee (PA) rate is attendance which is below 90%,
* If a pupil’s attendance drops to 90% and below, parents/carers will receive notification. Further absences will not be authorised without medical evidence. Medical evidence is any medicine or prescription with the child’s name and date on, or a note from the doctor or hospital

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 to above 96%.

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age attend school regularly. Parents/carers of children who are not yet of compulsory school age attend school are strongly encouraged to ensure their child attends school regularly in order to establish good habits of attendance and punctuality for later years.

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, this will lead to a notice to improve which monitors attendance for a set number of days, following that if no improvement is made then a penalty notice will be requested from the local authorities. Repeated offences may lead to a referral into the education welfare services.

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 will be completed by staff members and recorded on Arbor.
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, by telephone message, by text response or class dojo 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.
6. Timetable of Registration.

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| Nursery  Reception | Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 |
| 8:50am Morning Registration  12.45pm Reception Afternoon Registration | 8:45am Morning Registration  1pm Afternoon Registration | 8:45am Morning Registration  1.20 pm KS2 Afternoon Registration |

Our Headteacher has the responsibility for monitoring attendance and highlighting concerns through regular review meetings with the Home/School Link Worker.

Punctuality

The Key Stage 2 gate and Key Stage 1 door are open from 8.30am. The Nursery and Reception doors open at 8.45am.

Registration is at 8.45am for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and at 8.50am for Nursery and Reception. Any child arriving at school after this time is late.

The Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 school gates are locked promptly at 8:45am; any child arriving after this time must come to the KS1 entrance to be recorded as late. If the nursery and reception class doors are closed these children will also need to be taken to the KS1 entrance.

The school keeps records of all late arrivals, these records are kept in the children’s individual profile on Arbor Late arrivals are monitored weekly.

If your child is late for school past 9:15 the KS1 entrance will be closed and you will need to take your child to the school office. This means your child will be marked with a U code on the register meaning they receive an unauthorised absence for the full morning session. If your child is consistently late and getting U codes for unauthorised absence this will result in further action being taken.

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.

Recording Absence and Punctuality

Persistent Absence is monitored regularly by the home School Link worker and Education Welfare officer. As a result of this regular monitoring if your child is classed as persistently absent it is likely you will receive a telephone call, home visit or be invited to an attendance clinic. 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.

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| --- | --- |
| **Attendance** | **What will happen?** |
| **97% - 100%**  **0 – 5 days off per year** | **We will celebrate good attendance with you and your child. Your child is more likely to do well in school both academically and personally.** |
| **93% - 96.9%**  **6 – 17 days off per year** | **Informal support. Contact will be made with parents to inform them of the attendance. Attendance will be tracked weekly and support offered including Early Help support to identify areas of support needed.** |
| **90% - 92.9%**  **19 – 25 day off per year** | **Formal support. Contact will be made with parents to inform them of the attendance. Attendance will be tracked weekly and support offered including an agreed attendance contract. A letter will be sent home explaining the possibility of fines. Referrals may be made to the relevant agencies (including Social Care where appropriate) for further support. No absences will be authorised without evidence (for example, medical evidence).** |
| **Below 90%**  **26 or more days off per year** | **Formal support. This is a cause for concern and referrals will be made to the relevant agencies (including Social Care where appropriate) for further support. Attendance will be tracked weekly by the EWO who will contact the parents each week and hold attendance clinics for further support. No absences will be authorised without evidence (for example, medical evidence). Notice to Improve letters will be sent and fines issues where no further improvement.** |

# Children Missing in Education (CME)

This policy has been written in accordance to the guidance set out in the Stoke-on-Trent Council Promoting Regular

School Attendance – Children Missing Education (CME) which can be found here: [CME 2022](https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/jotter2.files/18380364?response-content-type=application%2Fpdf&response-content-disposition=inline%3Bfilename%3Dcme-policy-september-2022.pdf&X-Amz-Content-Sha256=UNSIGNED-PAYLOAD&X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIAIH4MJHC24RK4EHAA%2F20250319%2Feu-west-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20250319T165016Z&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Expires=3000&X-Amz-Signature=07dfae1fb455fa9325be20d0a03ea39c8ec631f7ba92ea408aba93b16bee3d5d)

The sections above explain how the school ensures that all children are accounted for. If pupils are not in school for more than three days and parents/carers are unable to be contacted then the school will first conduct a home visit. Should the child and parents/carers still not be able to be located the school will follow the procedures set out in the Stoke-on-Trent Council Promoting Regular School Attendance – Children Missing Education (CME) guidance. This includes completing one of the two forms found in the Children Missing in Education policy that are then sent to the relevant agencies including the Educational Welfare Service. When pupils move to a new school we always contact the new school to ensure that they have started as planned and to organise the transfer of all relevant safeguarding documentation.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

As a school we aim to raise attainment and attendance to meet National requirements. The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and at schools' discretion. Therefore, any absence during term time will not be authorised.

The Law states that parents **DO NOT** have an automatic right to take their child out of school in term-time.

If the leave in term time **is not authorised** and/or exceeds the 5 days or over that may be granted by the Head teacher, then a referral form will be completed for a fixed penalty notice (fine) to be issued. This is per parent per child.

* The first penalty notice issued to a parent will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
* A second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupils charged a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
* A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

**This is solely at the** **discretion** of the Head teacher and the Governing Body.

Therefore, parents/carers are requested to apply for a leave of absence during term time and must follow these steps:

An **‘Application for leave of absence form during term time’** must be completed at least four weeks before the potential absence. The form is available from the school office.

A meeting will be arranged to see the Education Welfare Officer, home school link worker and/or a member of SLT to discuss the **potential** leave of absence.

Invitations to this meeting will be sent to anyone whom makes an application. If the application is made late the meeting will be held in absences.

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.**

Any leave or suspected leave in term time will be recorded as unauthorised (G code)

Any leave or suspected leave in term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence and will result in a penalty notice being issued. It is your responsibility to provide evidence if this is not the case.

Involvement of Education Welfare.

We have a traded Educational Welfare Officer whose aim is to ensure all children in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire attend school regularly so they receive an appropriate education. School’s expectation is 96%, if your child’s attendance starts to decline this may be when we try to encourage and improvement in attendance through early intervention, identifying any barriers and trying to overcome these.

The Educational Welfare Officer has a statutory function and there is a legal obligation to ensure regular school attendance. As a traded officer we want to support families to ensure improved and sustained school attendance ensuring that legal enforcement is a last resort.

Once a formal referral to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) has been made, the following procedures will apply:

* Attendance meeting in school as well as a more formal meeting with the EWO 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.

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 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 Link 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/carer will have to reapply for their place on their return, should a place still be available.

Policy to be reviewed biannually.

**Signed………………………………………………………**

**C Crook**

**Headteacher**

**Signed………………………………………………………**

**Julie Thompson/Laraine Jones**

**Co-chairs Board of Governors**

**Date…………………………………………………**