The Federation of Chadsmoor Infant & Nursery School and Chadsmoor CE (VC) Junior School

**Attendance Policy**

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| Policy reviewed by The Federation Governing Body. |  |
| This policy links to: |  |
| * Behaviour for Learning Policy * Safeguarding Policy * Child Protection Policy and Procedure * E-Safety Policy * Pupil Premium Policy   **Updated: January 2019** |  |

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# Introduction

## The Federation believes that children and young people’s attendance is paramount to their life chances. Good attendance is the responsibility of all members of each Federation School and the broader community in which they serve. All Federation pupils should be encouraged to attend school regularly and punctually by the implementation of specific measures outlined in this policy, alongside School specific intervention strategies.

As a Federation, we follow current government guidance. Pupils with attendance levels below 90% will be considered to be persistently absent from school and will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. This is because repeated absence and lateness have a long term negative impact on children’s progress and achievement.

# Aims of the Attendance Policy

## The implementation of this attendance policy will encourage all pupils to attend school regularly and ensure both parents/carers and their children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality in the development of character and resilience.

## The content of this policy encourages all pupils to reach their true potential and become independent learners, who value the importance of application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and actions, both individually and through co-operative endeavours.

This policy runs in conjunction with the Staffordshire Code of Conduct for attendance.

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Code-of-Conduct-From-1.1.2018.pdf>

# Attendance monitoring

## Specific measures to monitor attendance must be embedded and regularly checked to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils through specific and tailored interventions:

* registering pupils accurately and efficiently
* setting attendance targets for individual pupils and year groups, in line with national expectations
* monitoring attendance of vulnerable groups in relation to national figures for all pupils
* using Pupil Premium funding to address persistent absence of Pupil Premium pupils, regularly monitoring the impact of such interventions
* contacting parents the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised
* regularly monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality, reporting overall absence and persistent absence rates for all pupils to the trust
* persistently monitoring low attenders over time to ensure rigorous intervention strategies are provided
* reporting school attendance statistics to the governing body, parents, Local Authority (LA) and DfE as appropriate

# Encouraging good attendance

## We will proactively reinforce good attendance and encourage improved attendance by using such measures as;

* Verbal encouragement and praise
* Formal recognition, such as attendance certificates and assemblies
* School rewards systems
* Seeking good practice from other Schools

## Teachers will:

* encourage classes to reach the school target on a weekly basis
* provide a motivating environment in which pupils are ready to learn, are valued and look forward to coming into school each day
* complete registers twice daily, during registration and inform senior leaders if there is a concern regarding a specific absence for example in matters of safeguarding

2.3 All staff will set a good example in relation to their own attendance and punctuality

# Absence and attendance codes

## The national absence and attendance codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. There should be no pre population of codes and individual school tracking systems, which monitor the whereabouts of pupils educated off site, must be robust and quality assured regularly.

## Details of the codes and government guidelines regarding school attendance can be found in the following document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

## We expect children to be in school for 8.55am at the juniors and 9.00 at the infants. Anytime after this will result in an **‘L’ code which is classed as a present mark, but displays that the child is late for school.** Any child arriving after 9.15am at the juniors and 9.20am at the infants, but before the end of the morning session will be recorded as ‘U’ in the register. This indicates that he/she arrived ‘late after registers closed’. **The ‘U’ code is classed as an unauthorised absence but records that the child was physically in school for part of the session.** The time is stated on the registration system. **Please note that 10 unauthorised lates (U code) within a 12 week period, can result in parents being issued with a Penalty notice.**

# Procedures for tracking attendance

* When a pupil is absent, parents are expected to contact the school either by phone, text, or email on the first day of absence. If contact has not been made, the school will contact home by text every day until a reason has been provided, starting on the first day of absence.
* Attendance patterns must be monitored, with strategic interventions implemented
* Schools will work in partnership with a designated EWO and relevant external partners, inviting parents into school for an attendance meeting when a pupil’s attendance falls below government guidelines and causes concern
* Schools will have internal structures to monitor all pupils’ attendance with allocated staff accountable for attendance monitoring and interventions
* A pupil is deemed late if they are not present at the beginning of the school day, unless agreed and authorised by the school prior to the date. If a pupil arrives after 9.15am at the junior school and 9.20am at the infant school, they will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence
* Pupils who achieve 100% attendance each term will receive recognition from the school
* Pupils who have completed a whole academic year without absence will receive recognition along with children who have attended 95% or above
* If a pupil is absent from school the absence will be authorised through communication from parents on the day of absence and also in writing when they return to school
* If a pupil is being monitored by the Educational Welfare Service, the School will seek medical verification is provided in order for the absence to be authorised
* Absences of 10 sessions or more will not be authorised unless medical verification is provided in the form of an appointment card, prescription counter foil, doctor’s note or packaging for medication
* Holidays taken during term time are only authorized at the discretion of the Headteacher
* At any point during an absence a school representative may visit in order to satisfy safeguarding regulation and offer support where necessary

# Truancy

## Truancy is when a pupil is absent from the school for any reason other than:

* Illness of the pupil
* When parents/carers have obtained the school’s prior permission by providing a detailed explanation for a request of absence in order for the school to determine if the absence will be authorised

## The sanctions for truancy will be supported by the schools’ Behaviour for Learning policy. If a pupil is absent without explanation when the register is called, an allocated member of the admin team will contact the parents on the same day of absence. Where no reply is received, a further letter should be sent as part of the School attendance procedures.

## When a pupil is missing from their lesson for no apparent reason school staff should inform the admin team, who will follow the School procedures, so that the pupil's absence can be further investigated. Class teachers should monitor their class registers to check for patterns of irregular attendance.

## Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the police have powers to remove truants found in public places and to return them either to their schools or a place of designated safety.

## A register should be marked by the class teacher at the beginning of every session (morning/afternoon).

## All children of compulsory school age should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. If a child is registered at school, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly. Parents’/carers’ have an important role in their child's education, therefore to support school fully they must be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions regarding any attendance issues.

## Pupils are actively encouraged to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually to school. Pupils and Parents should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence, e.g. bullying, racism, personal issues etc.

## The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents of a child of compulsory school age has registered their child at a school and they attend regularly. If a parent fails to do this the LA may bring prosecution under the Education Act (1996). Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and is punctual. If parents fail to ensure this they are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996) which may lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a prison sentence. Parents may be issued with a penalty notice.

## The LA in conjunction with information from school may issue a Penalty Notice if a child has any unauthorised sessions (**1 day or more**) where the pupil’s attendance is causing concern and, or below 90%, if the pupil has been excluded from school and is found in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion, late after the register has closed or has holidays in term time. The Penalty Notice is per child for each parent. The fine is to be paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the fine and the amount is doubled, to be paid within 28 days of the initial notice. Non-payment of fines can lead to prosecution under the Education Act (1996).