



Micklefield C of E Primary School

Attendance Policy

Our school, Micklefield CE (VC) Primary School, is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils and expects our staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment

1. RATIONALE:

Micklefield CE (VC) Primary school is committed to providing a high quality education for all pupils. We believe that pupils can only benefit from the education in our school through good school attendance. We will, therefore, strive to achieve the maximum possible attendance for all pupils and ensure that any problems are identified and resolved quickly.

2. AIMS:

- To continue to raise levels of attainment and achievement through high expectations of attendance and punctuality.
- To share the message of the importance of good attendance and punctuality with children and their families.
- To support families with individual needs to improve attendance and their access to education.
- To work effectively with our various partners to achieve high levels of attendance. It is recognised that
- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- It is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their community.

3. EXPECTATIONS:

It is expected that all parents will support the school to ensure their child always attends lessons unless illness or some unforeseen problem arises. Appointments at hospitals, medical centre, clinics and dentists should be made outside school hours unless impossible to arrange.

When there is a issue with attendance, parents are invited to school to a meeting to discuss the problem before a referral is made to the Extended Service Support or Attendance Improvement Office, if there are child Protection concerns then the Child Protection Procedures will be followed immediately.



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We expect the following from pupils:

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.

Parents and pupil can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the student or their parent unless a child protection issue makes this essential).
- Recognition and reward for good attendance.
- A quality education.

4. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

Authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be away. All other absence must be regarded as **unauthorised**.

Authorised absence will only be given in exceptional circumstances. These will be of unique and significant emotional, educational, medical or spiritual value to the child, which outweigh the loss of teaching time.

The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Pupil illness
- Close family bereavement
- Medical appointments



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- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated.

Approved Educational Activity

Where pupils are away from school but are undertaking an approved educational activity, this is authorised. Pupils are counted as present for calculating data for the Department for Education absence return. The following activities fall within this category:

- Field trips and educational visits both in this country and overseas.
- Visits to other schools for transition
- Education offsite

Absences should not be authorised for the following circumstances:

- Availability of cheaper holidays
- Birthdays
- Trips to see sporting or musical events
- Shopping or visit to hairdresser
- Over-sleeping
- Taking a long weekend
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a dental or medical appointment
- Family celebration

The 2013 amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) 2006 regulations remove references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the threshold of ten days from 1st September 2013.

The amendments specify that the Headteacher may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. If the leave is granted, 'Headteachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school.'

Family holidays do not count as exceptional circumstances.

The Department for Education and Local Education Authority have not defined the exceptional circumstances referred to in the 2013 regulations. It would be impossible to list or predict the many situations which may arise, and in line with national guidance, the final say whether circumstances are exceptional, lies with the discretion of the Headteacher.

Requests must be made in writing and the appropriate documentation attached to support the



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application. Applications for holidays in term-time must be made in advance, as the regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval.

If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence will not be authorised.

If a request is granted but the absence goes on for longer than agreed, the extra days absence will be unauthorised. If a request is granted, the Headteacher will decide the duration of absence.

The school is not responsible for setting work during a family holiday. However independent work is encouraged.

5. PENALTY NOTICES

The use of Penalty Warnings and Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Holidays in Term Time The Governors support and follow the DfE and LEA guidelines on issuing penalty notices for unauthorised (holiday absence.)

The Cost of these notices is currently £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 and £120 per child if paid between 22 and 28 days.

Penalty notices are triggered if a child has an absence of ten sessions in a 12 week period (half a day equates to one session therefore 5 days counts as 10).

Parents are informed in writing if the school processes a penalty request and are given the opportunity to discuss the reason for this or decide against removing their child from school in advance.

6. ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE THROUGH GOOD PRACTICE AND REWARDS

Attendance is encouraged in the following ways:

- Registers are completed at the beginning of each session and within 15 minutes of the start of the session.
- Attendance monitoring at appropriate times.
- Recording of good attendance on individual reports and/ or records of achievements.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems.
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty attending school.
- Sending parents appropriate absence reports as and when necessary.
- Weekly attendance awards.
- Certificates termly for 100% attendance.
- Sharing of information when transferring schools.



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7. RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

When a pupil does not attend, the school needs to respond effectively.

Step 1 – Absence text to main contact held on SIMS. If no contact is made this is then followed by phones call starting with the main contact, then any other contacts held on SIMS in priority order.

Step 2 – Request for Welfare check with Extended Services.

If, by day 10, the school has received no reason for absence and are still unable to make contact with parent/guardian, the Local Authority is notified.

8. LIASING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Poor school attendance may be a symptom of a wide range of safeguarding, community, family or individual circumstances. It may be necessary in some cases to require support beyond the remit of the school or the Attendance Improvement Office, I. e:

- Safeguarding team
- SEN educational service
- Behaviour Support Worker
- Extended Services
- Social Care
- Police
- Educational Psychologist

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APPENDIX

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities. The document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016' 'Annex A', also refers to the importance of registration from a child protection stance. This guidance is followed by Micklefield CE (VC) Primary School.

The Importance of Registration:

- An attendance register, electronic or manual, is kept on which, at the **BEGINNING** of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. Registers are collected from and returned to the school office.
- Manual registers are kept in ink and corrections must be made in such a way that the original entry and the correction are both clearly distinguishable. Authorised absences should be entered in red initially with the symbol for categorising the absence in blue or black.
 - Where electronic registers are used, hard copies, current for each session must be kept to observe the spirit of the law and for Health and Safety reasons.
 - Accurate marking of registers, and appropriate maintenance of electronic and computerised systems can have significant impact on overall school attendance and absence figures.
 - Attendance registers, and copies of electronic registration print outs are kept for a minimum of 3 years from the date that last entries were made.

Categorising Absence:

Symbols to be used in Registers (Categories)

From 1 September 2006 all schools are required to use a common set of codes to record pupil attendance and absence.

The Department for Education believes that these codes are best used within electronic systems for recording attendance and absence of pupils. Such electronic systems are capable of producing the data necessary for absence returns without time consuming counting up of possible attendance and actual absences.

The use of fixed codes will also assist both Local Authorities and Department for Education in monitoring not only whether pupils are absent with or without the permission of the school, but why pupils are absent from school.

- Only the school, in the context of the law can authorise absence, a note or explanation from parents does not guarantee authorisation, if a class teacher does not accept the explanation offered for the absence as a valid reason then the matter must be referred to the Headteacher.
- Emerging patterns of authorised absence should be reported to the Headteacher.
- Reasons for the absence should be entered in the register by the appropriate code symbol.
- Class teachers who experience difficulty in receiving a parental note should inform the Headteacher.

Micklefield's registers open at 8.55am and 1.00pm and close at 9.30am and 1.30pm

In the event of bad weather this period can be extended.

Where a pupil arrives during the period when the register is open they may be marked L which indicates late before the register has closed.



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Where a pupil arrives after register closure, they should be marked with the letter U to indicate present but late.

Removal from the school roll

Children of compulsory school age

Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (Education) Regulations 2006 sets out the circumstances under which a pupil of compulsory school age can legally be removed from the school roll.

Removal from the school roll under circumstances other than those detailed below is illegal:

- Where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- Where a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parent (s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- Where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- Where the pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Headteacher of the school has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with Education Welfare Service to obtain information on the cause of the absence.
- Where the Headteacher of the school has been notified that the pupil has died.
- Where a pupil in the nursery class has not transferred to a reception class at that school.
- Except in the case of a boarder, the pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school.
- If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date in term time. This is not the case if the school has reason to believe the pupil's return is prevented by an "unavoidable cause".
- Where a pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and has been notified an intention to discontinue in attendance.
- Where the pupil has been permanently excluded and this decision has been confirmed by the Pupil Discipline Committee.

Children who are not of compulsory school age

Section 3 of Regulation 8 covers absence of children who are not of compulsory school age.

A pupil may be removed from roll if:

- He/she has been absent, unauthorised, for more than 20 days; and
- The school has reason to believe the absence is not due to sickness or an unavoidable cause; and 8 Updated April 2017
- The school has not been able to find out where he/she is

Ensuring Pupil Information is up to date

Schools should ensure, as far as possible, that the information they hold on pupils and parents is accurate and up to date. This will help to ensure that contact with families is productive and that referrals to other agencies can be actioned effectively. Principle 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998 states 'Personal Data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date'.



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Pupils who are missing

Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquiries have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the Common Transfer File should be completed and uploaded to the Department for Education National Missing Pupils Database. The Local Authority will also be notified in line with our child protection policies.

Attendance Codes

Code	Description
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated Off Site (not dual registration)
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual Registration (attends other establishment)
E	Excluded (no provision)
G	Family Holiday (unauthorised or in excess)
H	Family Holiday (authorised)
I	Illness (not medical/dental appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (before registration closed)
M	Medical/ Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised Absence (not covered by other code)
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registers close)
V	Educational Visit or Trip
W	Work Experience
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
-	All should attend / No mark recored