The Meadows School

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Attendance Policy

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| Updated: | Feb 2022 |
| Date to be reviewed: | Feb 2023 |
| Ratified by Governors: | May 2022 |

**Amendment Register**

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| **Amendment**  **Number** | **Date** | **Detail** | **Amended**  **By** | **Approved**  **By** |
| 0 | Jan 2019 | Initial Issue |  |  |
| 1 | Mar 2020 | Reviewed | S Forbes | Headteacher |
| 2 | May 2020 | Ratified by Governors | S.Adams | FGB |
| 3 | Feb 2022 | 4.7 Added  5.2 Procedures explained  6.2 – 4 additional points added  9.24 Added | B Davies | Headteacher |

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1. **Rationale**

This policy has been adopted and written in relation to The Attendance Policy at the Meadows School and should be read in conjunction with the LAs Policies and Procedures and any DfE Policy, Statements and Guidelines.

1. **Introduction**
   1. We aim to provide an environment, which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

2.2 It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

1. **Why Regular Attendance is so important**
   1. Any absence affects the pattern of a student’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student’s absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same classes.
   2. Ensuring your student’s regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.
   3. **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody’s responsibility – families, students and all members of school staff.

3.4 **To help us all to focus on this we will:**

* Invite you to come and discuss any concerns regarding poor attendance;
* Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
* Reward good or improving attendance through assemblies, certificates and outings/events In line with the school reward system
* Inform you at the beginning of the academic year your child’s previous academic year attendance and set an achievable target for attendance for the year.

**4. Understanding types of absence**

4.1 Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. **We will require sight of appointment cards or letters regarding any appointments.**

4.2 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time or emergencies.

4.3 Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

* Parents/carers keeping children off school without good reason
* Truancy before or during the school day
* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
* Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
* Day trips and holiday in term time which have not been agreed

4.4 Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the families and the student. If you have any concerns please phone the school and ask to speak to a member of the Pastoral team.

4.5 The school follows guidelines set out by the Public Health Agency for recommended periods of absence, including the 48 hour rule following bouts of sickness and diarrhoea (see appendix A). For the full list of recommendations please speak with a member of the pastoral team, or alternatively, see ‘Managements of Medical Needs in School’ Policy.

4.6 Certain days hold special relevance for various religious communities, including Christmas and Easter for Christians, Eid for Muslims, Diwali for Hindus, and Passover for Jews, etc. Pre-authorised absence can be given for genuine religious observance.

4.7 For children with a parent/carer or close family member in prison, absence due to visiting this person in prison can be authorised if the school has been made aware ahead of the visit.

**5. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

5.1 A student becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child’s educational prospects and we need the full support and co-operation of families to tackle this.

5.2 We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

For these cases, we are likely to follow the following procedure from the day a child is absent:

- We will contact the family to request a reason for absence and ask to be provided with evidence of appointments or medical evidence for the absence.

- If we cannot speak with the family or evidence is not provided, we will send out a letter requesting contact.

- If we have not heard from families by the third day of absence, we may conduct a home visit to speak with the parents/carers and to check on the welfare of the child.

- Please note, if we have any safeguarding concerns about the child, we may conduct a home visit on the first day of absence.

5.3 PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include school based activities around raising attendance.

**6. Absence Procedures**

**6.1 If your child is absent you must:**

* Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence explaining the reason behind the absence
* Call into school using the designated absence line; you can leave a message or contact the pastoral team if you wish to discuss the absence
* Provide a letter or appointment card for any medical/dental appointments

**6.2 If your child is absent we will:**

* Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
* Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Pastoral team and agree steps forward to improve the situation
* If this does not improve attendance and all agreed steps have not been adhered to, we may refer the matter to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer
* If we have concerns about persistent absence and/or any safeguarding concerns, we may conduct a home visit during which we may ask to see and communicate with the child. This is for safeguarding purposes and to ensure the child is supported to access their education as soon as possible.
* We may conduct home visits in order to pass on schoolwork and resources for the child to be engaged with their education from home
* If we have safeguarding concerns, these will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead before making a decision whether a home visit is needed.
* We can conduct these home visits at any time but we will always conduct a home visit on day 5 if we have concerns regarding persistent absence and no medical evidence has been provided for this specific period of absence.

**7. Telephone Numbers**

There are times when we need to contact families about lots of things,

including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child or the child you care for, by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don’t then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

**8. Attendance and Prosecution Officer**

Families are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with

the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Officer from the Local Authority. These Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority.

**9. Lateness**

9.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your son/daughter misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, upset regular routines and can also encourage absence.

**9.2 How we manage lateness:**

9.21 Lessons start at **8.50am** and the registration period is until 9.10am, we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked up until **9.10am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

9.22 At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

9.23 If your child has a persistent late record you will be sent a letter to reiterate school expectations and may be asked to meet with the Pastoral team to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any

time if you are having problems getting your son/daughter to school on time (see Appendix B).

9.24 If you wish for your child to be educated on a part-time timetable, or you wish for them to attend school for hours that are different to 9-3pm (our usual school hours), there will need to be clear medical evidence given for this. This evidence will need to be in writing including thorough reasons why your child cannot attend school full-time and a date for reassessment of these needs, if relevant. This information will then need to be reflected in their Education, Health and Care Plan. Additionally, this information may be passed on to the Local Authority who fund the school place as well as the team responsible for assessing who is eligible for Personal Transport Budget.

**10. Holidays in Term Time**

10.1 Taking holidays in term time will affect your child’s schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not to take children away in school time.

10.2 There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off during term time to go on holiday.

10.3 All applications for leave of absence (in exceptional circumstances) must be made in advance. In making a decision the Headteacher will consider the circumstances of each application individually, you may be called to a meeting to discuss your request for leave of absence.

10.4 Any period of leave taken without agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

**11. Schools Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives**

11.1 The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

11.2 The minimum level of attendance for this school is 90% and we will keep you updated regularly about progress towards this level and how your child’s attendance compares.

11.3 Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our students can be amongst the best in the authority.

11.4 Throughout our school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

11.5 Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provide in our School Newsletter and we ask for your full support.

**11.6 Those People responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

Rupe Virk - Headteacher

Eileen Pace - Interim Deputy Headteacher

**12. Summary**

12.1 The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to families and to

promote attendance. Equally, families have a duty to make sure that their

children attend.

12.2 All school staff are committed to working with families and pupils as the

best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.



I have read and understand the terms and conditions of the Attendance Policy at The Meadows School.

Signed: Date:



Child’s Name: Form:

**Appendix A**

The Meadows School

**Dudley Road East, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3BU**

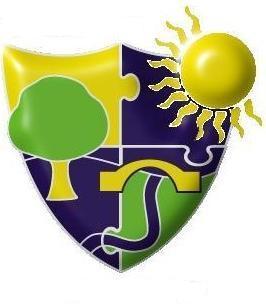
Telephone: 0121 569 7080

Medical Office: 0121 544 6754

Electronic mail: HYPERLINK "mailto:headteacher@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk" headteacher@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk

Website: HYPERLINK "http://www.themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk" www.themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk

**Headteacher: Ms Rupe Virk**



Date:

Dear families

Your child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has been sent home today with sickness and/or diarrhoea.

The school follows guidelines set out by the Public Health Agency for recommended periods of absence. Students should not return to school for 48 hours following the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. For more detailed information on this, please refer to the ‘Management of Medical Needs in School Policy.’

Your child’s transport **will be cancelled** on the following days:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

However, if your child has any further bouts of sickness and/diarrhoea they must remain at home for a further 48 hours following their last bout.

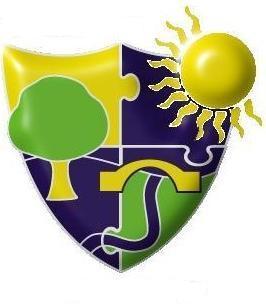
If you would like any further medical support regarding your child’s condition please contact their GP. Alternatively dial 111 for advice or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/> for some practical guidance. If you have serious concerns regarding your child’s health and well-being dial 999.

Yours faithfully

Ms Rupe Virk

Headteacher

**Appendix B**

The Meadows School

Dudley Road East, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3BU

Telephone: 0121 569 7080

Facsimile: 0121 569 7081

Medical Office: 0121 544 6754

Electronic mail: [rupe.virk@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:rupe.virk@themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

Website: [www.themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk](http://www.themeadows.sandwell.sch.uk)

**Headteacher: Ms Rupe Virk**

**Interim Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Samantha Forbes and Mr Simon Adams**

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We have been reviewing the number of children arriving late at school each day.

According to our records, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has arrived late to school on \_\_\_\_ occasions between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Children who regularly arrive to school late are less prepared for lessons, frequently and often miss important parts of their learning.

We encourage you to review your morning routine and make some small changes to support your child in arriving in school on time.

If you would like some support or would like to discuss this letter then please contact the Pastoral Team on 0121 569 7089 to arrange an appointment.

Yours faithfully

Pastoral Team