

The Meadows School



Attendance Policy

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Amendment Register

Amendment Number	Date	Detail	Amended By	Approved By
0	Jan 2019	Initial Issue		
1	11/12/19	Rationale added and Reformatted	G Barham	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.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 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.

3. Why Regular Attendance is so important

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.

3.3 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.

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.
- 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
- Send a note on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak to you.
- 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
- Refer the matter to the Attendance and Prosecution Officer if attendance does not improve.

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 son/daughter 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, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

9.2 How we manage lateness:

- 9.21 Lessons start at **8.55am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by **8.55am** 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 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.

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
Samantha Forbes - 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: _____