



## HOPE VIEW SCHOOL

### ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE POLICY

#### **Introduction**

Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is certainly possible, but in the event of your child being away from school it is essential that you, the parent or carer inform the school of the reasons for absence.

Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved. Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence.

There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.
- Please be aware that when a parent or carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised.
- Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.
- Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent or carer to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school and the Local Authority.

### **Aims of the policy**

To promote regular attendance thus offering all pupils equal access to learning.

### **Objectives of the policy**

Create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers.

Ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days.

This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

### **School responsibilities**

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) and support their work with pupils as necessary.
- To report to the local authority on attendance on a termly basis.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance.

### **Parent and carer responsibilities**

- To have children ready for collection by the taxi by the required time as informed by the taxi company.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence
- To request leave as far in advance as possible. Please note that requests for holidays during term time will not be authorised.
- To make applications for leave in writing, giving the reason for the request.
- To work with the school and EWO to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher or the SENCO in the first instance.

### **The process for monitoring attendance**

The school office will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss daily with the Headteacher.

Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

Stage 1: Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will make verbal contact with home.

Stage 2: If the concerns persist the school will write to the parents/carers.

Stage 3: If the concerns persist the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer and school representative. This may involve the school carrying out a home visit.

Stage 4: If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues.

Should concerns persist the EWO will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action.

Stage 5: The school will contact the Local Authority and initiate procedures to find alternative provision for the child.

### **Absences during term time**

- Application for term-time leave of absence must be **made at least two weeks in advance in writing to the Headteacher** by the parent or carer with whom the child normally resides. **Holidays during term time will not be authorised under any circumstances.**
- Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parent or carer will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.
- There are approximately 185 school days in a year which your child is expected to
- attend. There are also approximately 71 days of school holidays. This is over 13
- school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

### **Lateness**

#### **Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.**

- Pupils must be ready on time for collection by the taxi each day. The taxi driver or escort is not required to knock on your door or wait for more than 3 minutes for your child to come out and get into the vehicle. If a pupil is not ready on time and the taxi has to leave, they will not return, the school are not responsible for collecting them so they will be marked as an unauthorised absence.
- Lateness will be monitored and the E.W.O. (Education Welfare Officer) will follow this up.

- If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed at 9am, the pupil will receive a 'L'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.
- Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.
- Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with the SENCO.

### **Sickness**

- Please notify the school on each day of the absence.
- We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

### **Promoting good attendance**

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School by

- Awarding 100% attendance at the end of each term.
- By awarding a shield at the end of the school year to the pupil with 100% attendance for the whole year.

### **The Role of the Education Welfare Officer**

The Education Welfare Officer strives to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

Section 444 of the Education Act states that "if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence."

The relevant Local Authority, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

School Placement and Attendance

### **Implications of persistent non attendance**

Each child who attends Hope View School is expected to do so on a daily basis. The school has a duty to meet the objectives of a pupil's Education and Health Care Plan. The school cannot fulfil this obligation if a pupil does not attend school regularly. If a pupil's attendance continues to be a cause for concern despite a variety of different strategies and measures being implemented the school will contact the Local Authority directly and initiate procedures for terminating the school placement.

In cases where a pupil is coming to the end of their time in statutory education and wish to remain at Hope View School for their Post 16 education, this will not be supported by the school if a pupil's attendance has been a cause for concern.

### **Taking a Pupil off the Register**

The Headteacher will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations.

### **Equality and Diversity**

Hope View School is committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff in which people treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of: age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender identity, transgender, sexual orientation, trade union activity or unrelated criminal convictions. We strive to educate, promote and celebrate the wider diversity of society within our school community.

### **Links with other policies:**

**Safeguarding Policy.**

**Examinations Policy**

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

**Policy review date: September 2024**

**Responsible Person: Mrs C Lorne - Proprietor**