Attendance

Policy

Amberley Parochial School

Providing the rich soil that enables
our children to develop deep roots and flourish.

Chair of Governor: Dr Holmes
Approved by: FGB Committee
Approved on: Spring Term Two 2022
Review Date: Spring Term Two 2023
Other relevant policies: Safeguarding Policy, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Attendance Policy

As a church school we identify Christian Values that underpin the whole school of our community. These values inform our school's vision, aims and ethos. The values that relate particularly to this policy are responsibility and trust.

Examples of Exceptional Circumstances

1. Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specific time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be evidenced by production of the policy document of the organisation.
2. Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
3. Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided.

Where there are other factors which the head teacher may consider to be exceptional circumstances this may be referred to the local authority for advice.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of our attendance policy:

- The aim of this Policy is to secure maximum attendance for everyone at Amberley Parochial School.
- To ensure all children receive their curriculum entitlement and achieve their full potential.
- To develop the skills needed to embrace new experiences.
- To build effective partnerships between the school, parents and carers, and external agencies.

We plan and teach a skill based, creative curriculum. In order for this to achieve its purpose requires all children, and staff, to attend school every day.

Learning intentions are usually planned over a sequence of lessons and build on prior knowledge so children need to know what has happened before to gain the fullest understanding.

We need:

- Children to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year unless there is a good reason for absence.
- Children to arrive on time, appropriately dressed, prepared for the day and ready to learn.
- Parents / Carers to take responsibility for the two points made above.
- Parents / Carers to contact the school about the non-attendance of a pupil, if your child is unwell please contact us before 9.00 am.

Punctuality / Lateness

It is important that children arrive in school on time and ready to learn.

- The school opens to welcome children into the classrooms at **8.45 am**.
- Registration and first lesson at 8.55 am.

Registration will remain open for 30 minutes after the start of the school day at 8.55 am. If a pupil arrives at school during this 30-minute period a 'Late' mark will be given**. A pupil arriving after the 9.25 am. cut off time will be given an 'Unauthorised Absence from School' mark.**

If a child does arrive at school after the start time of 8.55 am they need to go to the School Office to sign in.

Should a pupil need to leave school following the morning or afternoon registration, they need to go to the School Office to sign out so that the school has a record that the pupil is no longer on site.

Being on time makes for a good start and shows consideration for everyone else in the school. It is also an important life skill for children to achieve economic wellbeing later in their lives when they are in employment.

If attendance, including lateness, is a problem we will notify the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer to support full attendance.

Every term the Head Teacher will look at the attendance of all children in the school. If attendance falls below 90% in a term a letter will be sent to parents / carers and the following term's attendance monitored more closely. If poor attendance continues parents / carers will be invited into school to speak to the Head Teacher. This may then lead to the school informing the Education Welfare Officer who can use court proceedings to prosecute.

Medical Appointments

We ask that every effort is made to secure medical appointments outside of the school day. If more than half a morning / afternoon are missed because of a medical appointment this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. We may ask for evidence to be produced if these become a regular event.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays in term time are not authorised. With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of Headteacher to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead, Headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist which will be agreed by the governing body.

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on the computer. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence then we send a letter requesting these details to parents/carers to complete. If this letter is not completed and returned by the specified date then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers from 9.00am to 9.30am on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important to set realistic targets; these targets may be set in consultation with the Local Authority or with the Governing Body. The school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.

School Target

Our school target for attendance is set at 98%

Persistent Absence Definition

Attendance below 85% is defined by the DFE as persistent absence.

Monitoring

Attendance is monitored weekly for any emerging patterns below 95%. Parents will be routinely contacted if attendance falls below 90% (Appendix 2). Referral to EWO Attendance will be made for pupils below 85% (Appendix 3).

Roles and Responsibilities

- Class teachers take the register each session.
- The School Office contact parents/carers if children are absent without prior notification.
- The Head Teacher and Governing Body monitor patterns and trends over time.
- The Head Teacher is responsible for decisions about any leave of absence requested for exceptional circumstances during term time.

Good Practice

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Reporting missing children to the LA
- Rewarding and celebrating good and improving attendance through newsletters, certificates, pencils and badges.

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole School.

Any unauthorised absence is damaging to a child's education as well as reflecting badly on the school. It also gives children the wrong messages about the importance of education which may lead to problems later in schooling. Good attendance and punctuality are important values for later in life.