



Warden Park Primary Academy

Reach for the Stars

Attendance Policy

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Legislation includes Acts of Parliament and Department for Education (DfE) circulars dating from the 1944 Education Act to the present time including 'School Attendance, Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, October 2014'. These regulate the procedures and requirements placed upon staff, directors and parents in regard to pupils of school age being in regular full time attendance.
- 1.2 Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in school.
- 1.3 At Sussex Learning Trust, we believe that pupils make greatest progress and achieve best when their attendance is regular and uninterrupted. Punctuality is a crucial personal characteristic valued by the academy and employers.
- 1.4 The Directors agree targets for attendance each year which are monitored by the Head teacher and the Assistant Head teacher.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Class teachers check attendance every morning and afternoon, using the SIMS system. Guidance for teachers is provided.
- 2.2 Assistant Head Teacher (Inclusion) monitors attendance of pupils regularly and works closely with outside agencies. Office staff operate a system of first-day contact.
- 2.3 Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends the academy regularly. When a pupil is absent parents are requested, if possible, to inform the academy by telephone or the Study Bug app on the first day of absence.
- 2.4 It is the academy's responsibility to grant leave of absence and approve any absence taken.

3. PROMOTING HIGH ATTENDANCE RATES

- 3.1 The academy will :
- 3.1.1 Set challenging targets.
 - 3.1.2 Ensure parents/carers understand why attendance is important.
 - 3.1.3 Make daily/weekly checks on absences.
 - 3.1.4 Maintain a late book. Communicate lateness to parents and apply sanctions as appropriate.
 - 3.1.5 Reward outstanding attendance with appropriate rewards.
 - 3.1.6 Work proactively with parents/carers, providing appropriate support to pupils with attendance issues.
 - 3.1.7 Involve outside agencies at an early stage.
 - 3.1.8 Highlight the importance of attendance through the curriculum.
 - 3.1.9 Use the SIMS attendance module to assist with monitoring.
 - 3.1.10 Scrutinise a weekly print-out of absence data.
 - 3.1.11 Produce a complete individual record of attendance at reporting to parents evenings.
 - 3.1.12 Produce a summary attendance graph showing trends over four years.
 - 3.1.13 Contact parents informing them of matters of concern. Set up parent attendance planning meetings.
 - 3.1.14 Report attendance in the prospectus.
 - 3.1.15 Supply the DfE and/or local authority with a termly and annual attendance return.

4. PROMOTING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 A positive learning environment ensures pupils want to attend. Accordingly the academy will :
- 4.1.1 Use rewards for good citizenship, achievement, effort and attendance.
 - 4.1.2 Have a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
 - 4.1.3 Provide a range of teaching styles and approaches and a personalised curriculum.
 - 4.1.4 Have high quality teaching resources.
 - 4.1.5 Employ high quality specialist teachers.
 - 4.1.6 Set challenging targets for each pupil and communicate these to parents.
 - 4.1.7 Use the pastoral system as a means of identifying pupils for particular support.
 - 4.1.8 Have a responsive, caring ethos.
 - 4.1.9 Ensure a safe, caring atmosphere.
 - 4.1.10 Maintain a pleasant, clean environment with attractive grounds.
 - 4.1.11 Discuss issues of concern with pupils at the Pupil Council.
 - 4.1.12 Employ restorative justice practices where appropriate.

5. Response to Poor Attendance

- 5.1 An attendance planning meeting will be held with the parents/carers and attendance targets agreed and monitored.
- 5.2 The EWS may be informed and a request for a FPN (Fixed Penalty Notice) made.

6. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 6.1 All absence requests must be made using the form 'Request for Withdrawal from Learning' and submitted to the Head teacher.
- 6.2 Leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Leave is unlikely to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

7. PENALTY NOTICES

- 7.1 Penalty Notices may be issued when:
 - 7.1.1 There has been an unacceptable level of unauthorised absence and enforcement is necessary to improve attendance. Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the head teacher. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences. The categories of authorised and unauthorised absence are explained in the 'Guidance to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations' 2006.
 - 7.1.2 A minimum of ten sessions of unauthorised absence in a ten school week period will usually have occurred. However, a shorter period of time may be considered appropriate in some circumstances.
 - 7.1.3 In the case of an unauthorised holiday taken during time if:
 - 7.1.3a Parents have not sought permission from the head teacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time.
 - 7.1.3b The head teacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway, or
 - 7.1.3c A pupil has not returned to the academy by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation.And there have been ten sessions of unauthorised absence in a ten school week period.
 - 7.1.4 A pupil is persistently late to school, ie arrives after the register has closed.
 - 7.1.5 Under Truancy Initiatives carried out under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 powers, a minimum of five sessions of unauthorised absence may generate a Penalty Notice, if these unauthorised absences occur in the ten school weeks (maximum) after the child was stopped on a truancy sweep; and
 - 7.1.6 When an excluded child is present in a public place during school hours on a day which is one of the first five school days to which the exclusion relates, or where that exclusion is for a fixed period of five days or less, any of the days to which the exclusion relates, under the protocol for Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

- 7.1.7 No more than two Penalty Notices, per child, may be issued to the same parent in a twelve month period. Alternative action may need to be considered if school attendance offences re-occur, in the light of advice from Legal Services.

8. CHILDREN AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION

- 8.1 The academy will inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:
- 8.1.1 Have been taken out of the academy by their parents and are being educated outside the school system, eg home education.
 - 8.1.2 Have ceased to attend the academy and no longer live within reasonable distance of the academy.
 - 8.1.3 Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend the academy.
 - 8.1.4 Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the academy at the end of that period, or
 - 8.1.5 Have been permanently excluded.
- 8.2 The local authority will be notified in advance of the deletion, when the academy becomes aware that the deletion will be made.
- 8.3 The academy will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of ten days or more.