

# Mackie Hill Junior & Infant School



## Attendance Policy

**Review frequency:** Two Years- except where revisions are required due to DFE policy changes or update in practice.

**Approval by:** Standards Committee

**Policy Date:** July 2018

**Review Date:** July 2020

**Lead Personnel:** Jayne Elliott

**Version:** 1

## **Rational**

Mackie Hill School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for all.

The school strives to promote a welcoming, caring and safe environment where each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All staff will work with pupils, parents and carers to help them meet their legal responsibility, in ensuring their children attend school regularly.

The school will establish effective systems of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance.

Parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality will be challenged.

Supporting Wakefield City Council improving attendance across the district. For more information see the council website [www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/school-attendance-matters](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/school-attendance-matters)

## **Aims**

1) To promote the highest possible levels of attendance by pupils the school will: -

- Establish attendance as high profile
- Apply the attendance policy consistently
- Monitor progress in attendance and report to the governors
- Endeavour to improve pupil's punctuality
- Discourage term time holidays

2) The school will make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school by: -

- Regularly reporting attendance data to the school governors
- Informing parents of school times, term dates and training days
- Having clear procedures for parents to inform staff of pupil's absence or lateness
- Promoting attendance and punctuality through clear communication with parents
- Liaising with the Education Welfare Service
- Using reward systems for good/improved attendance/punctuality

3) The school will develop a frame work which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks by: -

- Identifying designated staff to be responsible for first day of absence contact
- Ensuring clearly defined late registration procedures
- Having clear procedures and records of intervention regarding attendance concerns
- Identifying designated staff to liaise with the Education Welfare Service re attendance issues
- Reviewing attendance regularly

4) The school will provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils by: -

- Highlighting attendance in PSHE, assemblies and parent's meetings
- Improving communication between school and parents
- Informing parents when a pupil's attendance falls below 91%
- Providing parents with accurate and up to date information
- Making staff available to speak with parents

5) The school will develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data by: -

- Using a computerised registration system (INTEGRIS)
- Consistent use of attendance codes following LA and DfE guidance
- Identifying and collecting information on developing patterns of irregular attendance and punctuality
- Providing attendance information for the head teacher, governors, relevant staff, education welfare service and parents

6) The school will further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school by: -

- Initiating first day absence contact
- Making full use of computer generated letters
- Promoting expectation of school
- Encouraging parents to visit/communicate with the school

7) The school will use a system of rewards and sanctions by: -

- Actively promoting attendance with associated rewards
- Ensuring fairness and consistent implementation of rewards
- Working in partnership with the education welfare service, parent support advisor, behavioral support service and parents where attendance is poor

8) The school will promote effective partnership with the education service and other key services by: -

- Ensuring the attendance register and admission details are accurate and up to date
- Carrying out initial enquiries and interventions regarding attendance issues
- Gathering and recording relevant information to refer any concerns to the education welfare service
- Identifying key staff to liaise with the education welfare service and other agencies related to attendance
- Supporting the education welfare service in the use of enforcement tools, when appropriate to do so

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Parents**

- It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. Registers will be called promptly at 8.50 and at the beginning of the afternoon session. After registration in the morning all registers will be sent to the office. Any child who comes after this time will need to report to the school office. Parents will be informed if any child is persistently late.
- Must contact the school without delay to report any absence and contact the school on any subsequent day of absence
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact details
- Ensure their children have a good attitude to learning and attendance
- Work in partnership with the school to promote the best interest of their child

The law states that parents **do not** have a right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances may a head teacher grant permission for leave.

The school governing body sets out the requirements for permission to be granted for term time leave. Please contact your child's school if you wish to know more about this.

Parents who choose to take their child out of school without written permission from the school may be issued with a fixed penalty fine.

#### **School Administration team**

- To monitor attendance daily
- Ensure correct attendance codes are used
- To mark pupils arriving during registration as L (late) and those who arrive after the register has closed (30 minutes after the start of the session) as U (unauthorised absence)
- Maintain and update all contact information
- Prepare attendance data report for the Head Teacher every half term
- Send reminder letters to parents/carers re clearing unexplained absences every week

#### **School Administrator Responsible for Attendance**

- Will prepare a weekly list of pupils' with less than 95% and 90% attendance
- Will identify and monitor pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees, using the INTEGRIS system
- Will contact parents/carers if attendance/punctuality becomes a concern by telephone/letter
- To make first day absence telephone calls
- To send text/letter if no response to call

- If necessary will arrange an action plan meeting in school with parent/carers. This will also happen if an absence is not explained and extends past three days.
- If parent/carer fails to attend meeting will ask EWO to carry out a home visit
- Will hold review meetings with parent/carer
- Will maintain pupil notes regarding attendance issues
- If required will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service and liaise with the Education Welfare Officer

### **Class teachers**

- To record accurate details of attendance at the beginning of each session.
- Pass information regarding absence to the administration office
- Will speak to every pupil on returning to school about the reason for their absence to ensure they are supported and given the opportunity to catch up with missed work
- Present termly certificates and awards

### **Headteacher**

- Ensure there are named key members of staff with responsibility for attendance
- Submit reports to the governing body on various aspects of pupil attendance, including measuring progress against targets
- Ensure a whole school approach to the development and implementation of the school attendance policy
- Encourage staff, including ancillary and administrative staff, to see attendance as part of their responsibility
- Offer clear guidance to parents regarding their legal responsibilities in relation to attendance matters and information on attendance procedures
- Establish clear channels of communication between school and parents
- Chair attendance action plan meetings
- Work closely with the Education Welfare Service with regards to enforcement action

### **Governing body**

- The governing body is required by legislation to see that registers are kept correctly
- Should review attendance statistics and trends and support measures to improve attendance

- Appoint a governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding including attendance matters

### **Education Welfare Service**

- To provide a dedicated Education Welfare Officer who will regularly work in the school
- The dedicated Education Welfare Officer will support school staff in identifying attendance concerns and becoming familiar with the procedures and documentation required for referring attendance concerns to the Education Welfare Service
- The dedicated Education Welfare Officer will advise on policy, strategies and legal requirements
- Area Education Welfare Officers will liaise with school staff following referral to the service

Wakefield City council are committed to improving attendance across the district. See [www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/about-education-welfare-service](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/supporting-families/education-welfare-service/about-education-welfare-service) for further details on the service.

### **Conclusion**

All staff will be made fully aware of this policy and it will be applied fairly and consistently to all pupils. It is designed to be a useful living document and will be the subject of a regular review.

Date of Policy/Review: March 2019 – to be reviewed annually

**Appendix 1 - Attendance and Punctuality recording and action routines on a weekly basis**

Class teacher to record attendance and punctuality accurately on a daily basis



Admin team to try and contact home for unexplained first day absence



Insert correct absence code depending on parental contact



If the unexplained absence extends to a third day a home visit should be completed by the school



If no contact can be made by then the school EWO should be contacted immediately. The headteacher should be notified and the LA contacted for further advice.

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## **Appendix 2 – Responding to attendance and punctuality concerns on a termly basis**

Admin team to print out class summary reports each Friday. If this is the last week of half term then reward letters should be issued to those pupils achieving 100% attendance. See letter A3.



If a pupils attendance has dropped below 91% then letter A1 should be issued immediately. Parents will be invited into school for a support meeting.  
If punctuality is a concern then letter P1 should be issued. A concern is 5 lates in a term.



If after 4 weeks no improvement is seen in the pupils attendance then letter A2 should be issued. Parents will be invited into school for a support meeting.



After a further 2 weeks if no improvement has been made then the school should seek the support of the EWO. A home visit should be made, if possible with a member of staff and the EWO.



If no improvement is made the headteacher should contact the LA and issue a fixed penalty notice if appropriate. If required, further agencies should be informed and advice sought from these agencies.

### **Appendix 3 – Letter A1**

Dear (name)

Pupil name

We are writing to you with regards to your child's attendance at school, currently your child's attendance is (%). This figure is below 91% which is the level deemed by the government to be persistently absent.

We understand that absence from school may be unavoidable on rare occasions. To help us support you and your child maintain high levels of attendance, can you please ensure that you contact school before **8:45 am** if your child is going to be absent. This will help safe guard your child.

If there are any factors which you are aware of which are or will affect your child's attendance, then please contact the school to enable us to offer the necessary support and advice.

Regular attendance is essential in supporting your child's on achieving the best outcomes throughout school. We are confident you will want to work with us to help your child achieve the best they can.

May we thank you in anticipation of your support on addressing the concern and look forward to seeing your child's attendance rise above 91% again.

Yours sincerely

### **Appendix 4 – Letter A2**

Dear (name)

(pupil name)

We contacted you recently with regards to your child's attendance in school. Unfortunately, your child's attendance has not improved sufficiently since our last communication by letter. It is now vital the we receive some support in addressing our concerns.

Currently your child's attendance is (%) which is below the targets of 96% and 91% which is deemed by the government to be persistently absent.

At school we are urged to work with parents and the education welfare service to ensure children achieve and maintain high levels of attendance in school.

Could you please contact me as soon as possible so we can arrange a meeting with the deputy headteacher to agree ways in which we can work together to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Deputy headteacher

### **Appendix 5 – Letter P1**

Dear (name)

(pupil name)

I am writing to inform you that your child has been late to school on more than five occasions this term. Punctuality is essential with in school and this is there unacceptable.

At Mackie Hill School we firmly believe that working in partnership with you is the best way to improve the outcomes of our pupils. If there is a specific reason for your child's poor punctuality, please can you contact the school and inform your child's class teacher to ensure we can improve things and move forward.

Unfortunately, if your child's punctuality does not improve we will be asking for you to attend a meeting the deputy headteacher to address these issues.

Thank you for your support in dealing with this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Staff name

## **Appendix 6 – Letter A3**

Dear (name)

(pupil name)

We cannot believe already we have come to the end of this term. The year group have set some very high standards especially when it comes to meeting attendance and punctuality targets.

I am delighted to congratulate (pupil name) on achieving 100% attendance this term.

This is a truly significant achievement. Attendance has such a big impact on pupil outcomes and we therefore thank you for the support you have offered to the school in achieving this target for your child.

We are always grateful for your support and we hope it will continue into the next term.

Well done again on an important achievement.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher