



Burrsville Infant Academy
REAch2 Academy

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date of Policy: September 2018

Date Adopted: September 2018

Date for Review: September 2019

SCHOOL STATEMENT ON ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- Good attendance and punctuality by pupils and staff is part of this school's daily life.
- We ensure we provide dedicated time and resources to support attendance and punctuality, including the employment of additional staff as needed, e.g. home-school liaison or pastoral staff.
- We ensure a high quality curriculum and teaching.
- We ensure support is in place to meet the individual needs of every pupil.
- We have procedures in place that are monitored and reviewed with the input of staff, pupils and parents.
- We make decisions based on evidence, including through regular data analysis.
- We fast track attendance and punctuality issues with an emphasis on early intervention and referral to external agencies when required.
- We work in partnerships with the local community, Aquinas School Attendance Provisions, The Local Authority Attendance Compliance Service, businesses and parents.

TARGETS

- The use of targets is embedded throughout our school community.
- We regularly set and review achievable but challenging attendance targets for the whole school, individual pupils and specific groups, as required.
- We publish our targets to staff, pupils and parents in reports, newsletters and on our website.
- We compare our attendance with other schools by using national and local data, and strive to ensure that our attendance remains above the national average.

DATA

- We use effective electronic recording systems to ensure our data is reliable.
- We analyse our data to:
 - Understand the reasons our pupils are late to and/or absent from school
 - Identify:
 - Vulnerable pupils
 - Pupils who are or may become Persistent Absentees (PA – any pupil whose attendance is at or below 90%)
 - Measure the impact of our teaching and learning on attendance and punctuality
 - Evidence links between attendance and:
 - Attainment
 - Exclusions
 - Bullying
 - The support we put in for our pupils with special educational needs
 - Ensure that we allocate time and resources to match levels of need with an emphasis on early intervention
- Data enables us to agree action or support plans, and strategies for:
 - The whole school
 - Individual pupils with attendance difficulties
 - Vulnerable pupils
 - New pupils or those admitted to our school mid-term
 - Pupils returning after a period of absence
 - PA pupils or pupils on track to become PA (OTPA)

In order to maintain learning and progress

- Data provides evidence to help us review and amend our plans and strategies
- Data reports are provided to our Leadership Team and Governing Body, which includes data on specific groups and individual pupils.

PROCEDURES

Our procedures aim to achieve good attendance and punctuality within which staff, children, parents and when appropriate, Aquinas School Attendance Provisions and The Local Authority Attendance Compliance Service can work in partnership. We take a fast-track approach to dealing with attendance issues, promoting early intervention and prompt referral to external agencies where needed.

Registration

The register is a legal document and the school complies with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 by taking a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. We use statutory registration codes to indicate which pupils are late, present or absent, and whether any absences are authorised or unauthorised.

- Gates open at 8.40am/pupils may be on site from 8.40am.
- Pupils are expected to be in classroom by 8.50am. Paper registers are completed by the class teacher; any pupil not present at this time will be marked 'N' as being absent with no reason yet given.
- Pupils who arrive late must sign in at reception/be accompanied to reception by a parent who will be required to sign the pupil in and provide a reason for the late arrival, and then go straight to their classroom, where they will be marked 'L' as being late before the close of registers. Any pupil who arrives after 9.30am will be marked with a 'U' as arriving late after the close of registers. Please note the U code is counted as an unauthorised absence and will therefore reduce a child's overall attendance percentage.
- Parents are expected to contact school through the absence line by 9.00am to provide a reason for the child's absence
- Any absence deemed by the school to be without good cause or reason will be unauthorised and marked 'O'
- The registration of every pupil is collated and stored on the school's Management Information System (MIS).

Attendance concerns

Concerns may be raised by parents, staff or through data analysis. In order to clarify and address these concerns we use and keep records of a variety of procedures and interventions. These stepped procedures are intended to be in line with any continuation or escalation of the concern but we may skip or repeat steps as appropriate to a pupil's individual needs or circumstances. This will be evidenced by monitoring the impact of interventions whilst taking into account the need to address issues in a timely manner. Our 'escalation' procedures are:

- Automated text message home to alert parent of an absence and to request the parent provides a reason for the absence.
Please note this text is only sent to parents who have failed to comply with the agreed procedure of providing a reason for their child's absence to the school by 9:00am.
- Telephone call home made by an appropriate member of staff to alert parent of individual absence or early stages of concern.
- Letter sent home by an appropriate staff member to alert parent of individual absence, overall absence rate, or to invite to a meeting.
- Meeting in school with parent, pupil and appropriate staff to discuss concerns, note pupil/family circumstances that may be affecting attendance, and agree a support plan to address the concerns and improve attendance; this may include temporary alteration to the pupil's timetable or educational provider and/or referral to external

agencies. All agreed plans will be monitored and reviewed in consultation with the pupil and parent, and input from external agencies will be expected to build on work carried out by the school.

In addition the school will:

- Publicise school term and holiday dates through newsletters and the website.
- Carry out regular 'register sweeps' where school staff and/or a member of Aquinas staff will call at the home of any pupil absent from school with no reason in order to discuss this with the parent.
- Conduct 'late gate' initiatives where pupils will be encouraged to arrive at school on time and move promptly to registration; parents will be contacted if their child's punctuality gives cause for concern and the pupil may be subject to sanctions.
- Ensure links with further education/training providers and employers, for example through work placements/experience, presentations and inclusion at assemblies, PSHE lessons, focus/curriculum days, career sessions, etc.
- Offer a wide range of quality assured alternative provisions for pupils deemed to benefit from a personalised package. Attendance at, and impact of such provisions will be closely monitored by the school and may be ended, adjusted or extended as appropriate.
- Use a rewards and sanctions system that impacts positively on attendance and is applied individually according to need.
- Offer targeted support for parents including parenting groups, attendance panels and parenting contracts.
- Referral to the Local Authority Attendance Compliance Service will be made where concerns continue regarding a pupil's attendance despite evidence that the school has made every effort to bring about improvement through the use of our own support and interventions (as detailed above) and it is agreed that a child's attendance may only be improved with the involvement of a statutory service.

Please note: Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence.

Leave of Absence

Parents do not have the right or entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday. The school will not authorise a pupil's absence due to a holiday during term time as this will disrupt the pupil's education. If the holiday is taken, Aquinas or The Attendance Compliance Service may issue a Penalty Notice fine for £120 if paid within 28 days to each parent for each child taken out of school; or may instigate legal proceedings against the parent/s.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

The school will make checks to establish the reason for a pupil's absence but where this is not possible and the parent does not respond to school contact we will refer the pupil to the Local Authority (represented by The Attendance Compliance Service) as CME (under the Education Act 1996, Chapter 2 Part 6). The Local Authority will then carry out checks, including with the Police and Social Care where appropriate to determine the wellbeing and safety of the child.

Deletions from the School Roll

Under the Education Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 (R12) we advise the Local Authority (through The Attendance Compliance Service) of our intention to delete any child's name from the school roll. Parents should inform the school if their child will not be returning to us; providing details such as your new address, the name of your child's new school, the date of your move, etc.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff

- Have good attendance and punctuality
- Model practice in line with school policies
- Know their pupils well
- Use a holistic or 'team around the child' approach to raise and resolve issues
- Act as the 'key worker' as part of support plans when appropriate
- Know and understand their own and others' roles and responsibilities, and apply these consistently
- Take ownership and responsibility for promoting social and emotional skills across the whole school
- Act as a coach or mentor to other staff when requested to do so by senior managers
- Have their skills, knowledge and understanding regularly reviewed and assessed so as to inform their Continuous Professional Development (CPD) timetable. CPD may include formal and informal training, external and in-house, coaching/mentoring, group and individual work

Headteacher

- Provides the school with a strong and determined leadership to improve attendance

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Ensure that attendance and punctuality is a feature in the School Improvement Plan
- Work with the Governing Body to agree whole school attendance strategies, policies and procedures
- Ensure that pupils are actively engaged in shaping, delivering and reviewing school policies and activities on attendance and attainment
- Ensure that parents are consulted on any changes to the attendance policy
- Model expected attendance practice
- Use data reports and other evidence to analyse the links, correlation and impact between attendance and:
 - Behaviour; attainment; teaching and learning; exclusions; and bullying
- Support the School Attendance Leader and School Attendance Officer
- Ensure a robust staff performance management system that ensures staff skills, knowledge and understanding is assessed so that staff receive CPD in line with the needs of the school
- Ensures that new staff undergo an induction process and receive support (mentor or coach) with regards to attendance matters
- Take action where staff members are not complying with attendance legislation
- Ensure there are systems in place to move pupils quickly into registration or lessons
- Ensure there is alignment between academic and pastoral systems
- Ensure there is a planned and comprehensive approach to promoting social and emotional skills within a whole school framework, including assemblies, PSHE lessons, curriculum/focus days, etc
- Ensure staff with specialist skills are used effectively to re-engage pupils returning to school
- Ensures staff with specific attendance responsibilities have dedicated time to carry out their roles effectively
- Ensure the curriculum provision in the learning support unit is of a high standard and pupils are supported to return to the mainstream provision
- Ensure that pastoral support systems are in place and that all staff and pupils are able to access them
- Ensure school ethos, policies and procedures are communicated to parents

- Ensure parents have opportunities to engage with school through a range of community events
- Ensure that support systems/a participation strategy is in place to engage hard to reach parents; and that parents know how to easily access external agencies
- Ensure the school works with local residents, faith leaders and businesses to engage them in promoting regular attendance by pupils, e.g. by preventing non-attendees from using business premises, attendance at assemblies and PSHE lessons to reinforce the need for good attendance and punctuality
- Ensure the local community is encouraged to and knows how to alert the school to concerns about attendance and punctuality

School Attendance Leader (SAL – Miss Siggery)

- Is a member of the SLT and has a key strategic role in improving attendance with the ability to influence school development and access resources
- Supports the SAO
- Ensures attendance data is accurate and reliable in order to provide reports and commentary to the SLT

School Attendance Officer (SAO – Mrs Lingwood)

- Is supported by the SAL and SLT
- Responds to parents' requests for help and support with a child's attendance
- Takes the lead in arranging, monitoring and reviewing individual pupil attendance support plans
- Consults with individual pupils to ensure they know their attendance targets, current levels and how to improve
- Ensures parents are informed when concerns arise about their child's attendance; and that parents are consulted and kept informed of interventions, support, further concerns and/or improvement

Aquinas School Attendance Provisions

- Assist the Headteacher with the Attendance Policy Review - ensuring full compliance with the current DfE and ECC guidance,
- Produce integrated intervention templates, tracking and analysis - quick and efficient identification of pupils of concern as well as recording interventions that have taken place for outcome evaluation,
- Conduct Safeguarding Welfare Home Visits - when the absence has not been reported by the parent and the whereabouts of the pupil is unknown visits will normally be conducted on the day of the school's request,
- Produce tried and tested letter templates to -
 - raise initial concerns over Attendance and Punctuality at levels set by the school, offer advice (backed by The DfE and NHS) and reaffirm the school's expectations,
 - invite the parent(s) to attend a School Attendance Meeting, chaired by Aquinas who will also complete an Action Plan for the parents to follow. Aquinas does not set a threshold for the level of absences before a meeting may be called,
- Issuing of Legal Warning Letters, sent on Aquinas letterhead. These letters are the precursor to any legal action that may be taken where The Education Act 1996 (S.444(1)) has been breached by the parent,
- Aquinas are an Accredited Organisation under the Community Safety Scheme and have the power to Issue Penalty Notices. Penalty Notices will only ever be issued where all other intervention has failed to bring a pupil's attendance in line with the expected level.
- Produce detailed Graphical and Annotated Half Termly Attendance Reports - designed in consultation with school staff, governors, ECC and Ofsted. The contents of these reports are tailored to the requirements of the school and includes PPG, FSM and SEN attendance evaluation all benchmarked against the National averages,

- Be available 5 days a week, 39 weeks of the year for email and telephone support - answering any attendance or safeguarding concern,
- Prepare or contribute with other agency referral and liaison - CAMHS, Social Services, Family Solutions, MECES, Essex Police, EYPDAS, YOTs, Woman's Refuge, Open Road, School Liaison Nurses and other local support services,
- Deliver Staff training on DfE Guidance and The Education Act relevant to attendance,

Class Teacher

- Engages pupils in an ethos of attendance and learning
- Understands the positive impact of tutor time
- Supports individual pupils with concerns or issues that may affect attendance
- Identifies possible vulnerable pupils and ensures early intervention and support
- Supports and welcomes back pupils following a period of absence and clarifies the reason for absence, taking appropriate action to reduce the possibility of a recurrence

Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) or staff new to the school

- Are supported (mentored/coached) by a named member of staff in attendance issues
- Undergoes an induction process that includes the ethos of 'attendance for learning'

Governing Body

- Works with the Headteacher and SLT to agree, monitor and review whole school attendance strategies, policy and related procedures
- Monitors attendance matters in the School Improvement Plan
- Analyses data in order to set and review attendance targets
- Has a named attendance governor to lead on attendance matters
- Attends regular training on attendance including in-house, external and e-courses
- Play an active role in the implementation of strategies where appropriate, e.g. Late Gate, Pupil Voice or consultations, awards assemblies, taking part in attendance panels and in agreeing parenting contracts
- Provide challenge to the SLT on attendance issues

Pupils

- Attend school every day, on time or in accordance with any agreed timetable
- Take ownership of his/her own attendance
- Take an active role in attendance issues by contributing to the School Council, reviews of school policies, taking part in pupil consultations, write newsletter articles, etc
- Take part in assessing and evaluating his/her own learning and development
- Seek assistance when needed for *any* concern which may affect his/her attendance, such as issues with other pupils, staff, subjects, family circumstances, exams, etc
- Understand the link between attendance and attainment; and how these may subsequently affect future education, training or employment opportunities

Parents

- Support the school by signing and adhering to the home-school agreement
- Keep accurately updated with school policies, procedures, term and holiday dates, etc through the school website and newsletters – do NOT rely on word of mouth or social networking sites for this. If unsure, please telephone the school to check
- Ensure you understand the link between attendance and attainment; and how these may subsequently affect your child's future education, training or employment opportunities
- Engage with school and support your child by attending community or other events
- Telephone the school by 9:00am to explain your child's absence; providing evidence to support this if requested by school
- Ask school for support or report concerns you may have

- Respond to school texts, phone calls or letters regarding absence by your child and attend meetings when invited so that concerns may be addressed and support agreed
- Make medical or dental appointment out of school hours and keep appointment cards/letters, prescription labels, etc as you may be asked to provide these as evidence to support the absence