



## Millfield First & Nursery School

### Attendance Policy

Date: Autumn 2018

Review Date: Autumn 2019

#### **Millfield First & Nursery School follows Hertfordshire's Local Authority Policy on School Attendance.**

At Millfield School we want the whole school community – governors, staff, parents and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality.

Good attendance helps the children in this school community to maximise their learning. This policy will support us all to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Millfield School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

We aim to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality, to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. We expect effective attendance from our pupils to ensure maximum opportunities for attainment and progress. Ofsted states that 'Outstanding' schools 'ensure pupils value their education and rarely miss a day at school'.

#### **Expectations**

The responsibility for effective attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils. All these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them.

The School will be expected to:

- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis;
- Follow up regular instances of poor attendance and punctuality;
- Rigorously monitor the attendance on a weekly basis;
- Be responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance;
- Work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole - as one of their key tasks;
- Support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance;
- Actively address all issues - such as bullying – which may lead to non-attendance;
- Encourage all staff - including ancillary and administrative staff - to see attendance as part of their responsibility;
- Address attendance from a whole school perspective. Actively promoting the link between attendance and achievement;
- Notify the Local Authority of any pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly, have irregular attendance, or have 10 or more consecutive school days absence without the school's permission. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under Section 175

of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained absences (<http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>).

The Parents will be expected to:

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually, with attempts to be in school every day;
- Ensure that their child is properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn;
- Inform the school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school;
- Maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary;
- Ensure that the school is informed of any changes of contact details;
- Take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings;
- Work in partnership with their children's school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance;
- Avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours;
- Not book holidays during term time.

The Pupils will be expected to:

- Attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually;
- Be ready to learn.

### **Doors Open**

- At 8:45 am. Pupils may enter the building at that time and are expected to arrive at this time. Pupils should not arrive at school before 8:40am. A member of staff will be present from 8:40am to welcome parents/carers and children.

### **Registration**

- Registers are called at 8:55am and at 1:05pm. Registers close at 9:05am and at 1:15pm. Registers are marked consistently by staff.
- Any pupil arriving after 9:05am but before 9:30am will be marked as 'late'.
- Any pupil arriving after 9:30am will be marked as absent for the whole of the session.
- For the afternoon session, any pupil arriving after 1:15pm will be marked as absent for that session.
- Registers will be marked in accordance with DfE guidance. No gaps will be left.

### **Lateness**

- The school prospectus and website clearly state the time at which school begins and finishes, including the time at which registers open and close. We do not keep a register open for the whole session.
- Any pupil arriving after 9:05am should report to the School Office to sign in.

## Following up Lateness

- Parents whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted by the Head Teacher, who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality.

## Reporting Absences

- Notification must be provided for all absences from school. A telephone call is acceptable.
- Parents must contact the School Office on the first day of absence. If the absence is prolonged interim information would be appreciated, so that the school can help with home-learning or other necessary arrangements.
- Absences are authorised by the Head Teacher.
- The school may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.
- The school will check up on any absences where a reason has not been notified. In the event of no contact having been made regarding a child's absence the parents will be contacted by the school secretary. If unexplained absence continues, other contacts will be telephoned and further to this a 'drop in' to the child's home may be deemed as appropriate. If the school is concerned regarding irregular attendance the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be enlisted.
- When the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the beginning of a session, the absence should be recorded as unauthorised and any subsequent correction to the register made as soon as practicable after the reason for the absence has been established.

## Leaving and returning to School during the School Day

- When pupils leave or return to school during the school day, office staff must be notified and pupils must be signed in/out at the office.

## Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Only the school can approve absence, not parents.—To help parents distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence the following guidelines are recommended. If after reading these guidelines you are still in doubt please contact the Headteacher.

- The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) were amended in 2013. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2013, amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
- **Special Occasions** - It is for schools to determine whether an absence in this category should be authorised or not: much will depend on the circumstances of the particular case. Generally the rule should be that only truly exceptional occasions should be sanctioned through authorised absence after a written request is made to the Headteacher.
- **Family Bereavements** - The death of a family member can be a particularly traumatic event in any young person's life. Schools have discretion to authorise absence to attend funerals or associated events and any request would be dealt with sympathetically.
- **Days of Religious Observance** - Absence of a pupil for participation in a day set aside exclusively for religious observation by the religious body to which the parents belong is classified as authorised absence. It would be helpful if the school could be given advance notice of religious observance days.

## **School Procedures**

- Parents are regularly reminded of these expectations eg, in letters home and in newsletters.
- The school monitors attendance of individual pupils on a weekly basis. Any concerns are followed up initially by a phone call. If concerns remain or attendance becomes worse a letter would be sent to the parents by the Head teacher. In cases of persistent poor attendance the AIO (Attendance Improvement Officer) would be notified and they would then contact the parents.
- All vulnerable groups' attendance is carefully tracked and monitored.
- Parents, pupils, staff and governors are informed of whole school attendance issues on a regular basis.
- The weekly attendance figure is placed on the school website and is displayed in school at the entrance.
- The School shares information on individual pupils' attendance as necessary with parents, pupils and staff.

## **Rewards**

- A Good Attendance award is given to the class with the best attendance record for the week at Friday Celebration Assembly in the form of a certificate and trophy.
- Pupils with 100% attendance in any term are praised for their achievement. 100% attendance for the academic year is rewarded by receiving a 100% attendance badge and certificate; their names are entered into a prize draw.

## **Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)**

- The School works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school.
- The Head Teacher meets the AIO on an agreed schedule.
- The School works with individual pupils and their parents to improve poor attendance. When attendance does not improve sufficiently the School will consult with the AIO on the next steps to be taken.

## **Part-time time-tables**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs. A part time timetable must be time limited and must not be treated as a long term solution and can only be made with parental agreement. The school should mark the sessions were the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

Guidance on part-time timetables is available at - <http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/attendance.shtml>

Date approved by School Improvement Committee: 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018