



## SOUTH CAVE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

### PROMOTING GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE Information for Parents

#### **Introduction:**

We aim to provide a school environment which enables and encourages all our pupils to gain the maximum benefit from the education provided. For children to flourish it is vital that they attend school on time, and every day unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

It is vital therefore that you ensure your child attends regularly and this guidance sets out how together we can achieve this.

#### **Why Regular Attendance is so important:**

There is a clear link between attendance and attainment. Any absence affects your child's education, and regular absence can seriously affect their learning, disrupts teaching routines and the learning of others in the same class.

As a parent/carer you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child attends school regularly. Permitting absence from school without good cause is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

#### **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

Creating a regular pattern of attendance is everybody's responsibility, parents, pupils and members of school staff.

#### **Understanding types of absence:**

The register is a legal document and every absence from school has to be recorded and classified by the school (not by the parent) as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why the cause of any absence is always required.

**Authorised** absences are sessions away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

**Unauthorised** absences are those which the Local Authority attendance policy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absences include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the register has closed ( 25 minutes after the start of school )
- Shopping trips, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes there are other issues that affect their attendance. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never good to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This can make things worse as it gives the impression that attendance does not matter. Any problems maintaining regular attendance are best sorted out at an early stage between the school, parents and pupil. Swift contact between home and school is more likely to result in a successful outcome for your child.

### **Persistent Absenteeism:**

A persistent absentee is a pupil that misses 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is seriously detrimental to a child's educational prospects.

In line with Local Authority guidelines and expectations we monitor all absence thoroughly and if your child is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee you will be informed of this immediately. If attendance does not improve parents will be invited to an action plan meeting where support and strategies to improve attendance will be offered.

Persistent absentee cases may then be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

### **Absence Procedures:**

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Send a note in on the first day your child returns with an explanation of the absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- If absence persists, we will invite you in to discuss the situation.
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service if attendance falls below 90% and shows no sign of improvement.

### **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please make sure we have all up to date numbers in case of emergency.

### **The Education Welfare Service:**

We ask that you contact the school at an early stage if you are experiencing difficulties with your child attending school. Working together nearly always results in a successful outcome; if difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer to the Education Welfare Service, who can offer further support and guidance.

### **Punctuality:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they will miss work and will not receive information and news for the day. Pupils arriving late disrupt the lessons and can be a cause of embarrassment for the child.

### **How we manage lateness:**

The school day starts at 9.00 a.m. and we expect your child to be in class ready for the register to be taken.

Your child will receive a late mark if they arrive at school after 9.00 a.m. and before 9.25 a.m.

At 9.25 the register will close. If your child arrives after this time they will receive a mark which shows that they are in school, but in accordance with regulations it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This means that if lateness persists you may face the possibility of receiving a penalty notice.

### **Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Policy:**

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Head teachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Please note this is not an entitlement. The Head teacher will only authorise absence in line with the East Riding Behaviour and Attendance Partnership 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Policy'. Head teachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education.

**There is no longer a provision in law for Head teachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday.**

If your request is approved, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and the school is not obliged to provide work for your child to complete.

Any unauthorised leave of absence will be recorded as unauthorised by the school on your child's records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

All staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to raise attendance levels and ensure the best outcomes for pupils attending our school. We appreciate your support in this endeavour.