



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

<b>Date written:</b> February 2017
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<b>Date adopted by Governors:</b> 7 February 2017
<b>Review Date:</b> February 2018

## Policy Amendments:

Date	Detail

**This policy has been reviewed with the DfE Advice on school attendance and is in line with Local Authority procedures:**

ATTENDANCE TABLE		Actions
96+% and above	Expected attendance	Rewards & Acknowledgment
90%-96%	School Monitoring of Attendance	School warning letter sent home Half termly pupil tracking sheet with reward for improved attendance
85%-90%	Cause for Concern – Educational Welfare Officer monitoring	School warning letter Educational Welfare Officer referral & monitoring Education Welfare Officer to visit home. Attendance case Conference Meetings to be held.
Below 85%	Significant Concern – Educational Welfare Officer involvement	Legal warning Letter issued by Local authority Attendance meetings with Educational Welfare Officer and Head Teacher Fixed Penalty Notice - £60 per child per adult.

### **Principles and aims**

Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at Sunnyside Academy and help to establish good lifelong learning habits. Parents/Carers, Staff and Governors are expected, as daily routine, to promote the good attendance and punctuality of all pupils.

### **Aims of the policy**

In the first instance to develop and implement a policy that is effective for the school, taking into account our values, ethos curriculum and high percentage of pupils with a Special Educational Need. Secondly, to share responsibility for securing good attendance and punctuality for all pupils attending the school. Thirdly, to encourage pupils to secure good attendance through supportive intervention and positive recognition and finally to support the safeguarding of all our pupils in ensuring we respond swiftly where we have not had a particular child in attendance for a period of time with unexplained circumstances. These cases will be discussed with the Headteacher and Local Authority on a case by case basis.

#### 1.1 – Roles and responsibility

- 1.1.1 Parents and Carers
- 1.1.2 All Staff
- 1.1.3 The Attendance Team
- 1.1.4 The Headteacher
- 1.1.5 The Governing Body

#### 1.2 – Actions to improve attendance

#### 1.3 – Register Keeping

#### 1.4 – Punctuality

#### 1.5 - CME

#### 1.6 - Leave of absence

**1.1.1** Parents and Carers have a responsibility to ensure good attendance and punctuality for their children as a matter of law. In addition to this parents have all signed a home school agreement which sets out their responsibility for good attendance.

**1.1.2** All Staff take a proactive role in securing good attendance and punctuality. Evaluation of attendance and punctuality is carried out at the end of every half term during an Assertive Mentoring meeting with all pupils on an individual basis. Staff are responsible for reporting attendance concerns on CPOMS to the Family Liaison Officer and Family Intervention Officer for a period of monitoring and possible intervention.

**1.1.3** The Attendance Team (made up of NA, GH and CB) takes responsibility, under supervision from the Headteacher, for the day to day management of pupil's attendance and punctuality at school. This involves First Day Response action, monitoring and evaluation of individual and national attendance targets, family liaison, referrals to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and other services deemed appropriate to support the attendance of all pupils at the school.

**1.1.4** The Headteacher offers all staff reasonable supervision and guidance in relation to the attendance and punctuality of pupils. He must report attendance statistics to the Governing Body and the Local Authority.

**1.1.5** The Governing Body must evaluate the attendance statistics presented by the Headteacher and take responsibility for providing constructive feedback in relation to local and national targets for attendance taking into account our very high SEN cohort of pupils and their individual attendance needs.

**1.2** The school employs many initiatives to encourage good, lifelong attendance. Some initiatives are school wide for example the Assertive Mentoring scheme of achievement, Amber improvement groups etc. and, some are individually tailored to pupils and their families and involve work completed by the Family Liaison Officer or Family Intervention Assistant.

However, when a pupil's attendance falls below 96% and there is no reasonable explanation a letter will be issued by the Family Intervention Assistant detailing the national expected target of 96% and offering the opportunity for parents and carers to seek advice and support. If attendance continues to fall a further letter will be issued detailing concerns and next steps should the attendance fall below 90%. A formal letter would then be issued advising parents their child's attendance has fallen below 90% and an EWO referral will be completed. Parents and carers will then be invited to discuss their child's attendance formally at an Attendance Case Conference. The Education Welfare Officer will visit the family before this meeting to discuss individual needs and support that may be of benefit to the pupil and family. Where no improvement is made and attendance continues to deteriorate following this Attendance Case Conference a Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter will be issued. At 85%< a child is now at risk of falling into the category of Persistent Absentee (PA). Continued deterioration will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

### **Fixed Penalty Notice:**

The Head Teacher may notify the Local Authority to request a fixed penalty notice if:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost to unauthorised absence by a pupil in one term.
- At least 10% of unauthorised absences occur within a term or over an academic year.

Each parent/carer could receive a fixed penalty notice each for each child at a current cost of £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days or £120 per child per parent within 28 days.

All absences without reason or for which no explanation has been provided will be treated as unauthorised absence.

If levels of unauthorised absence for compulsory school age children (5yrs plus) rise above 10% or there are more than 10 missed sessions within an Academic Term, then Attendance Case Conferences will be held with the Head Teacher and Welfare Officer.

**1.3** Registers are taken at the start of each working morning and afternoon session as a matter of legal cause and the safety of pupils. Registers are taken in the classroom, electronically. At 9:10am a list of pupils with no known cause of absence is provided to the Attendance Team for investigation via First Day Response. Any reason for absence given or late pupils are updated on the system after First Day Response has been completed. Staff are expected to follow SIMs information in regards to codes used when a pupil is absent and seek further advice and clarification if they are unsure.

If further days of absence occur without notification, then identified school staff will make a home visit and leave a calling card if there is no answer. All absences will be monitored closely by the Head Teacher, School Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer.

**1.4** Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time and ready for learning. The late record book will be viewed weekly by the Headteacher with referrals being made to the Family Liaison Officer where punctuality is recurring and unacceptable. Action will be taken where a pupil is late five times within a half term. Parents will be invited to discuss the punctuality of their child and expectations will be made for punctuality to improve. Should punctuality continue to be an issue causing lost teaching time a referral to the EWO will be completed and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to parents.

### **1.5**

Children with poor attendance may be at risk of becoming missing from education. Children with poor attendance are subject to rigorous scrutiny through our attendance monitoring procedures. Where children regularly attend medical appointments within school hours then written confirmation of the appointment must be provided by the parent/carer.

The criteria used is:

- Children who are believed to have left the area – Destination unknown
- Children who fail to arrive at Sunnyside Academy in the Autumn Term

In these circumstances the school attendance officer will liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and follow the Middlesbrough Council CME Procedures for recording, tracking and monitoring the progress of CME cases.

Details of new cases will be submitted to the Local Authority designated CME officer by the School attendance officer using a specific form. The usual procedures relating to common transfer files and the national S2S website will continue.

Sunnyside Academy's attendance and safeguarding team will make every significant effort to establish the child's destination and liaise with relevant professionals within and across local and national authorities. In some cases, this may also require international searches.

If the child is not located, then the child will be removed from the school register after 20 school days. The Local Authority Pupil Support Team will continue to review the "destination unknown" cases on a monthly basis and will inform the school of outcomes.

The school will hold all relevant information on the child/children until a destination and receiving school is identified. The information will then be passed on by the relevant personnel in school.

## **1.6**

Leave of absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. No leave will be authorised by the Head Teacher in September or during Year 6 SATs tests in May each year. Parents and carers are asked to complete leave of absence request forms available from the school office or website, two weeks prior to the requested leave. The Head Teacher will look at the current attendance percentages for the requested child/children and the nature of the exceptional circumstances and then respond.

A response to the request is returned to parents and carers within 48 hours of the request. The Head Teacher should determine the number of days a child can be away from the school if leave is granted. Should there be any difficulties or queries parents are requested to contact the Head Teacher who will attempt to clarify the situation. Any authorised absences are still classified as an absence.

***Leave taken without authorised consent from the Head Teacher may result in further action***

***The attendance policy has been created to reflect practice within our setting. The policy will be subject to change annually or in light of new legislation. The policy will be formally shared with staff after governor approval. Parents and carers will be invited to discuss the policy at any time; it will be available on the school's website.***