

SHELTON INFANT SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Policy Statement

- High attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills and knowledge which will equip them for life.
- Shelton Infant School aims to achieve high attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents and Education Welfare Service can work in partnership.
- This policy is based on the principle of equal opportunities for all.
- Monitoring attendance supports the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Aims

- To maintain a positive atmosphere where high attendance is the normal pattern.
- To demonstrate that attendance is taken seriously and that high attendance is valued by the school.
- To keep children safe and ensure their welfare needs are met in accordance with safeguarding practice.
- To implement the policy in a fair and consistent manner.

The Law

A parent is responsible for ensuring that their child of compulsory school age receives a full-time education and attends school regularly. This is a legal requirement.

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If a child turns five between 1st January and 31st March they are of compulsory school age on 31st March. If they turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August, they are of compulsory school age on 31st August. If they turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December, they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.

Schools cannot grant leave of absence to pupils of compulsory school age during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This approach is needed to ensure that the school adheres to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Derby City Council have defined 'exceptional circumstances' as:-

- the death of a close relative
- significant family illness
- involvement in court proceedings.

Leave of absence requests must be made to the headteacher in writing at least 2 weeks prior to the intended absence.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation will be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or prosecution proceedings.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued by Derby City Council a separate notice will be issued to each parent.

The school may authorise requests for absence not exceeding five days for pupils who are not yet of compulsory school age providing the pupil's attendance is above 95% at the time the request is made.

Types of absence

There are two main types of absence:-

- Authorised absence – when the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or the school has given approval in advance for the absence
- Unauthorised absence – when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence after a parent's request.

When a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this absence may not automatically be authorised. The child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Keeping a child away from school with minor ailments such as a headache or a slight cold is not acceptable and repeated absences will need to be supported by medical evidence to ensure the absences are recorded as authorised.

Roles and Expectations

Parents – we expect parents will:-

- Ensure their children attend school and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Appreciate the importance of uninterrupted education for their children.
- Work in partnership with the school to encourage high attendance of pupils.
- Ensure that they contact school as soon as possible whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Ensure that their child arrives on school on time, well prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that medical appointments and holidays are taken out of school time.
- Contact school to discuss any problems which may be affecting their children's attendance.
- Notify school immediately of any change on contact details.

Parents can expect the following from school

- Regular, efficient and accurate recordings of attendance.
- First day contact (and each subsequent day of absence) when a pupil fails to attend school without a good reason being provided.
- Contact with parents if a child is regularly late for school.
- Colour coded attendance sheets are sent to parents and carers three times each year (January, April & September) to confirm attendance levels and the number of days of education missed through absence.

- Our Learning Mentor is available to meet with parents to discuss any issues parents may have and to provide support. This is confidential and support will be offered in the best interests of the child.
- High attendance having a high profile across the school with frequent rewards for high attendance.

Pupils – as children grow and mature it is hoped that they will develop a sense of personal responsibility towards school attendance. In an infant and nursery school, children are dependent upon their parents getting them to school. However, issues which may make a child unwilling to come to school will be discussed as part of our Relationship, Health and Citizenship curriculum. Children will be given the opportunity to discuss school problems and difficulties of attending within a listening and caring environment.

Attendance rewards

The school actively encourages the attendance of pupils. Each week, during the school's Celebration Assembly, an attendance trophy is presented to the class with the highest attendance for the previous week. If a class achieves 100% attendance for any week the trophy is filled with treats and stickers.

At the end of each term certificates and prizes for 100% attendance are presented to children during special attendance assemblies.

Children who achieve 100% attendance for a whole academic year are rewarded with certificates and £10 book vouchers.

Attendance Registers

The law requires all schools to have an attendance register. All pupils (regardless of age) must be placed on the register. The attendance register is taken twice daily by a teacher or, in the absence of a teacher, a teaching assistant. Teaching students may complete the register under the supervision of a teacher. When completed the register is taken to the school office.

The register taken in the morning closes 20 minutes after the start of the morning session. Children who arrive after this time will be marked as absent without authorisation unless school has been forewarned or a parent brings them in and gives a very good reason for the lateness. Any person bringing a child to school after 9am will be asked to sign the 'Late Book' at the school office and to record their reason for lateness.

The register taken in the afternoon closes immediately after the register has been taken.

If a child is marked present and subsequently leaves the school for any reason, the office staff will record this.

The School Administrator inputs all attendance data onto RM Integris using the office computer. The codes used to record absence are those detailed in the DfE publication 'School Attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent school and local authorities' (August 2020). These codes must be used because they are used

for collecting statistics through the School Census System. This data helps the school, local authority and Ofsted to gain a greater understanding of the level and the reasons for pupil absence. All attendance information is kept in accordance with confidentiality and data protection practice,

Monitoring absence

The school will make every effort to obtain and record the reasons for all absences.

Every week, the Headteacher and School Administrator monitor the attendance of all children with less than 92% attendance since the start of the year. Where attendance is giving cause for concern, the headteacher and/or Learning mentor may speak with parents directly, write to parents or refer the pupil to the Education Welfare Service. Patterns of absence and/or lateness will be followed up. Discretion will be used for pupils with particular medical/physical/social needs, eg. the need for more than usual medical appointments.

If the classteacher is concerned about a child's attendance and/or lateness they will speak to the Headteacher or the Learning Mentor.

Each child's level of attendance is recorded on their annual report to parents issued during the second half of the summer term. Additionally, the school issues colour coded attendance sheets to parents three times each year (January, April & September) to confirm attendance levels and the number of days of education missed through absence.

The Headteacher reports attendance to the Board of Governors at least once every term.

Children Missing Education

A pupil who is absent from school for 10 consecutive days or more with no reason being given is regarded as a 'child missing from education' and the school will follow the procedures laid down by Derby City Council. Before referring to Derby City Council, the school will have made all possible enquiries to trace the pupil using additional contact numbers. Members of staff may also visit the family home. Where there are safeguarding concerns Social Care will be contacted.

Safeguarding

The school recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff who have direct or indirect contact with the pupils and their families, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupil. Absence and lateness are safeguarding factors which are monitored to identify pupils who may be vulnerable for welfare reasons or identified as not making progress in their learning.,

