

WORKSOP PRIORY C OF E PRIMARY ACADEMY



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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At Worksop Priory C of E Primary Academy, we have a School Attendance and Punctuality policy so that we can:

- Provide structure for responding to absences
- Ensure consistency of practice
- Offer guidelines to new members of staff, students and stakeholders
- Enable people to discuss, review and share good ideas and practices
- Work within a framework of good practice that both supports and motivates pupils and is consistent across the school

GOOD PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

Parental Support:

We believe that the role of parents/carers in supporting the Academy's efforts in securing high levels of attendance is crucial. At Worksop Priory C of E Primary Academy, we intend to maintain close, effective and positive links with our parents/carers and ensure that they are contacted at an early stage to deal with unexplained absences of pupils. The school regularly communicates with parents explaining attendance regulations, giving guidance about expectations, providing them with the school's attendance data compared with targets. The Home-School Agreement includes a commitment from parents/carers relating to attendance and reporting of absences.

Unauthorised Absence:

The school runs a first day calling system which involves parents being contacted by text on the first day of absence, if there has been no written or telephone communication from home. A record of this is kept online by the Teachers to Parents texting website and brief details of any other communication made by the school is noted on the school's student information management system (SIMS). An appropriate mark is recorded in the register by the class teacher, or a member of the office staff.

Lateness:

If a child arrives after the register has been closed, he/she is required to report to the office where a note is made in the register. This allows us to monitor lateness and identify absence patterns. A late mark is recorded in the register by the office staff.

Holidays during Term Time:

The school is not permitted to authorise any holiday absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers taking their children out of school for the purpose of a holiday may face a fine as prescribed by Nottinghamshire County Council. The school is likely to refer any parent whose child's attendance at school over any six week period falls below 90% as a result of a holiday being taken. The school will only consider authorising holidays in term time under the following exceptional circumstances.

- ✓ A parent is a member of the armed forces or a police officer with directed leave
- ✓ A terminal illness to a close family member
- ✓ Religious observance (up to 3 days per year)
- ✓ Other circumstances deemed to be out of the control of the parents

Applications for holidays during term time must be made using the official form available from the school office. Applications MUST be made at least one month before the intended absence. Failure to meet this deadline will withdraw the applicant's right of appeal over the Headteacher's decision (or the Chair of Governors) should the parent/carer wish to contest this.

Furthermore, where unauthorised holidays or absences are recorded more than once in an academic year, a request for prosecution may supersede the penalty fine procedure.

Early Intervention:

Monitoring and encouraging attendance is an integral part of the school ethos and it is acknowledged that poor attendance has a direct impact on individual achievement, levels of attainment and whole school standards. We counteract this by ensuring that all staff are involved in making an early response to developing patterns and or unacceptable patterns of absence and reporting these to the Attendance Officer. Cases of 'attendance for concern' are heard as part of the weekly Family Support and Wider Opportunities Team (FSWOT) meeting.

Safeguarding

Where any member of staff feels that absence from school of any child may in any way be a safeguarding issue, they report their concerns immediately to the Senior Designated Person.

Strategies used by Class Teachers when tackling early signs of absenteeism:

- ✓ Discussion with pupil
- ✓ Communication with parent/carer by telephone
- ✓ Sending out letters querying lateness and/or concerns over absences
- ✓ School based interviews/meetings with parent/carer

Marking the Attendance Register

Staff are aware that registers are legal documents and may be called upon as evidence in a court of law. It is a statutory requirement that registers should be marked at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session by the person responsible for the class.

Non-starting Pupils:

At the beginning of an academic year, there may be some new pupils who fail to take up their allocated places. The whereabouts of each student is immediately investigated by the school in conjunction with the Admissions Personnel of the LA. Only when factors have been fully investigated and in agreement with the LA can pupils be removed from the school roll.

Publication of Information about the level of Pupil Absence:

The school utilises an electronic registration system whereby staff insert the relevant marks onto the system.

Attendance awards and initiatives

Details of each class's attendance is shared in Good News Assembly on a weekly basis, alongside the use of an attendance board in the main hall. There is an attendance trophy for the class with the best attendance each week. Children whose attendance is above 99% at the end of an academic year are taken on a special trip to celebrate their excellent attendance.

Regular updates of attendance targets and levels are made either at Good News Assemblies or in newsletters.

Monitoring Procedures:

- The Attendance Officer has overall responsibility for monitoring Attendance Registers
- The Academy Governors receive information about pupil attendance in the Head Teacher's termly report.
- Annual attendance figures are sent electronically to the DfE through the school Census and are published through the Nottinghamshire Performance Handbook.

SNMAT Statement

Educational research consistently links lower achievement with poor attendance. Simply put, this means that those pupils who attend school more frequently are rewarded with better outcomes and enhanced life-chances. SNMAT actively supports and encourages academy leaders in their work to constantly promote and improve pupil attendance in order that all pupils are provided with the best possible opportunities to realise their potential.

Updated: Autumn 2017

Next review: Autumn 2018



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Monitoring of Attendance – Process and procedure

Worksop Priory C of E Primary Academy has a commitment to regularly monitor attendance levels and applies the following procedures to enable poor attendance to be identified and challenged:

Identification

The Attendance Officer produces an attendance report each half term highlighting pupils whose attendance fall into any of the following categories:

- Between 90 - 95%
- Between 85 - 90%
- Below 85%

Between 90-95%

Parents/carers whose children fall into this category receive a letter explaining that their attendance needs to improve. A copy of the Worksop Family Attendance Flyer is also attached. Parents are invited to speak to the school if there is anything that they would like help with to make improvements.

Between 85-90%

Parents/carers whose children fall into this category receive a letter inviting them to come to an Attendance Panel meeting. This meeting is typically supported by the Headteacher, Attendance Officer and a Governor. Targets and an action plan are set to improve attendance and a further review meeting is booked for the following half term. The action plan is copied to the parent/carer for a signature and returned to school. A letter, with the signed copy, is sent to the parent/carer with a date for the next review meeting.

Below 85%

The same principle applies as in the 85-90% category, with the addition that where attendance levels do not improve between meetings (to a minimum of 1 term), a referral to Targeted Support is made. Where improvements have been made, but not enough to move into the next category, parents/carers are made aware that, despite this, it is still a serious attendance issue.

Within this category, where parents/carers have failed to attend Panel meetings on two consecutive occasions, the school automatically makes a referral to Targeted Support.

Celebrating successes

Where attendance *improves* to above 85%, a similar letter in the following half-term to that in the 85-90% is sent, but with reference to the recent improvement.

Where a child's attendance rises from one threshold to another, the family is rewarded with a certificate of commendation.

Exceptions

From time to time, the Attendance Panel may use their discretion to lengthen the timescales for improvement in attendance rates where special or extenuating circumstances occur. This may include, but not be limited to, periods of extended illness, hospitalisation or other issues beyond the reasonable control of the parent/carer.

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