

THRIFTWOOD



Attendance Policy

September 2018

1. Aims

Our school and college aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Maximising attendance of all pupils, ensuring maximum learning opportunities
- Providing an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. A target of 95% attendance is set for all pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day. A log will be kept of children who are persistently late (not due to transport reasons).

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school or college on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). The school will phone parents / carers on a daily basis when the reason for the absence is unknown.

Parents should also provide a written explanation of absence on their child's return to school.

If any member of staff is concerned about a child's absence, the Head of School should be informed.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Written confirmation of these appointments is also requested.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.5 Reporting to parents

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, will be reported to the parents at the end of the academic year within their child's report. During the year, parents will receive a letter if there are concerns about their child's absence.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Any requests should be put in writing to the Headteacher on the school's 'leave of absence' request form. This is available from the school office or on the School's website.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- the number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Children who achieve 100% attendance will be presented with certificates and receive a special award at an awards assembly – school site only.

6. Attendance monitoring

The pastoral team monitors pupil absence on a half termly basis to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include pupils with incomplete weeks, lateness and periods of extended absence. If concerns are raised by the analysis, parent discussions will occur either through telephone calls or formal letters.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Local Academy Committee

The LAC is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.

7.3 The pastoral team

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. They will organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school SIMS Attendance Management system. They will contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence and will ensure a satisfactory reason has been established. They will then make judgements, together with the Headteacher, as to whether the absence is authorised or not authorised.

Reviewed: September 2018

Next Review: September 2019