

# Horbury St Peter's & Clifton CE (VC) Primary School

## Attendance Policy – Updated June 2016

Pupil attainment, achievement and development depend on regular attendance in school. Encouraging good attendance is the shared responsibility of the schools, pupils, parents and all other educational partners. The aim of St Peter's & Clifton CE (VC) Primary School is to offer a broad, creative and inclusive curriculum and ethos which will encourage school attendance. Through strong values and expectations we will ensure that pupils enjoy coming to school and recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

### Aims of the Attendance Policy are

- To raise attainment and achievement levels by having high expectations of attendance from all pupils
- To create an environment in which good attendance is celebrated and accepted as the norm
- To make a safe learning environment for the teaching, learning and development of pupils, hence encouraging outstanding attendance
- To work closely with other agencies to support pupils and families and in turn raise attendance
- To raise the profile and understanding with both pupils and parents to reduce the number of persistent absence

### Procedures - Agreed Codes

The school will use the agreed coding for absences and lates.

# - Planned whole or partial school closure

\* - Not Yet Marked

/\ - Present

B - Educated off site (NOT Dual reg.)

C - Other Authorised Circumstances

D - Dual registration (attend elsewhere)

E - Excluded (no alternative provision)

G - Family holiday (NOT agreed)

H - Family holiday (agreed)

I - Illness (NOT medical or dental)

J - Interview

L - Late (before registers closed)

M - Medical/Dental appointments

N - No reason yet provided for absence

O - Unauthorised absence

P - Approved sporting activity

R - Religious observance

S - Study leave

T - Traveller absence

U - Late (after registers closed)

V - Educational visit or trip

W - Work experience

X - Non-compulsory school age absence

Y - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Z - Pupil not on roll

### **Recording an Absence**

All absences are recorded in the Absence Book which is kept in the school office. Absences are then taken from this book and copied onto the class register within the School Administration System. Once all the registers have been completed on the SAS a report is produced showing the number of children in school for the morning session. This report is kept with the Absence Book until the following day.

Children arriving late i.e. after the start of the school day or leaving school before the end of the school day are recorded in the 'Children Arriving Late/Leaving Before The End Of The School Day Book'. This is also kept in the school office.

### **Absence due to appointments -Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments**

We would expect that these appointments will take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the pupil's education. Full day absences for medical appointments will not be authorised unless discussion takes place between a member of staff and home. For medical appointments to be authorised, should produce the medical appointment card/letter/text message, and these will be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher. Pupils will be expected to attend school before or after the appointment (or both) depending on the time of the appointment.

### **Exceptional Circumstances Absence**

The school expects that parents will take their holidays during the approved school break. It should be noted that there are 175 days each year when pupils are on holiday from school. The cost, convenience or availability of a particular holiday will not be taken into consideration.

Parents must accept that additional absence will be unauthorised and will be coded so upon their child's attendance record.

Absence for religious observance may be agreed by the Headteacher but should not exceed 2 days in any school year.

The Government has changed the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations in relation to term time holidays and this came into force on 1 September 2013.

As a result, the Headteacher can no longer allow any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This means that holidays in term time **will not** be authorised and will be marked as an unauthorised absence in the school register.

Any request for Exceptional Circumstances Absence must be put in writing to the Headteacher.

### **Registers**

Legally, registers must be taken twice daily am and pm.

### **First day of absence**

In the event of your child not being able to attend school parents must inform school before the start of the school day. Failing to do this, the school will try to make contact with parents by text in the first instance (First Response). If school is unable to make contact by text or telephone they will continue each successive day of absence, until they successfully make contact and find the reason for the absence. Records of first day contact and reasons for absence will be recorded.

Failure to clarify the reason for absence will result in the absence remaining unauthorised, a letter will be sent by post to parents requesting a reason to be completed and returned to school for recording.

### **Safeguarding**

If a child continues to be absent with no reason, further enquiries will be made promptly. In the event of schools being unable to locate a child they will refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer – Children Missing Education. If a parent has applied for exceptional circumstances leave for their child, parents will be advised that if they do not return by the agreed return date then they may be taken off school roll, this could lead to the permanent loss of a school place.

### **Lates**

- Once the bell rings at 8:50am for the start of the school day at 9:00am, the doors are closed and pupils are classed as late
- Arrival after the agreed school start time means a pupil is late and will result in an L code being given on the register
- Registers will be closed 20 minutes after the start of the school day. Arrival after this time will result in the pupil receiving a U code, this is classed as an unauthorised absence
- Schools will monitor lateness and make contact with parents if their children are persistently late

### **Rewards**

Punctuality Pete (an attendance mascot) will be awarded each week to the class with the best attendance record. An attendance record for each class is displayed in the school reception.

### **Duties and responsibilities**

All staff are responsible for promoting and raising attendance and have a responsibility in the implementation of this policy.

### **Parent/Carer responsibilities**

- In order to prepare children for a successful school experience it is vital to promote good attendance from an early age
- The school promotes excellent attendance from all the pupils
- All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child/ren of school age receive a full time education and legally pupil's must go to school every day during term time unless there is a valid reason for non-attendance
- Must inform the school on the first day of absence
- Must provide school with a reason for non-attendance
- Ensure that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance
- Must ensure that their children are collected from school on time
- show any documentation requested by the school
- To book if at all possible any medical appointments outside of the school day
- To book any holiday no matter how short out of school time

### **Pupils**

Pupils should

- be aware that good attendance is important for their learning
- know the acceptable and unacceptable reasons for not coming to school
- know to report to the office if they are late

### **Class teachers**

- Will promote/encourage and celebrate good attendance through the school reward system
- Must complete registers correctly and on time
- Pass on information about absences given to them by parents in writing to the school office
- Make pupils aware that every day counts and that their attendance is important
- Will complete agreed school practices for raising/promoting attendance within the school policy
- If they have any concerns over a pupil's attendance, they must initially speak to the parents and speak to the school member or staff responsible for monitoring attendance

## **Governors**

Governors will

- Delegate powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy
- Nominate a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Headteacher and to report back to the Governing Body
- Ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent absentees or poor attendees
- Monitor termly progress towards targets
- Be responsible for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

## **School Attendance Team**

A nominated member of staff will ensure school intervention is completed which includes:

- close monitoring and appropriate action takes place for all children and that evidence of actions are recorded
- sending texts/making phone calls and following up with letters for non-response when children are absent
- liaising with other relevant colleagues to identify children causing concern and to communicate all action to the Attendance Leader School Attendance Team
- speaking to children and contacting parents regarding unsatisfactory attendance and agree improvement strategies
- collecting daily voicemail messages
- overseeing first response calls
- updating Class Teachers with information about the attendance of children in their class/form
- reporting periodically to the Senior Management Team and Governors
- analysing weekly attendance statistics for each class to highlight trends
- keeping records and details of children undergoing attendance related issues
- keeping records and detailed chronology of:
  - all referrals and reasons
  - progress of each case
  - outcomes
  - named contacts
  - meetings with parents
  - consider referral to appropriate agencies for care and support to improve attendance
- at the point of referral check school evidence gathered and discuss next steps with appropriate agency
- liaise and make referrals where necessary to other agencies – e.g. Education Welfare Officer. Ensuring school is kept up-to-date with any developments
- support families and children to raise attendance and make regular visits and direct work with families/pupils who have been identified
- support in the form of an
  - Early Help Plan where appropriate.
  - maintain records of actions taken
  - ensure the Senior Leadership Team and designated attendance staff are kept well informed of any actions/developments for their pupils
  - prepare evidence for legal action if the situation escalated

## **Persistent Absentees**

Schools have a legal obligation to notify the local authority of pupils whose attendance is below 85%. They are then classed as a 'Persistent Absentee'. If a pupil is missing school without good reason, schools and local authorities have a number of legal powers that they can use.