

EMMAUS



Catholic and Church of England Academy

Southend Road, Sheffield, S2 5FT Tel:0114 2766474

Email: enquiries@emmaus.sheffield.sch.uk

Website: <http://www.emmaus.sheffield.sch.uk>

Headteacher: Helen Simmerson

Attendance Policy And Procedures

Prepared by : Clare Fairclough and Helen Simmerson
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Review date

October - Annually

Policy Statement

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. Emmaus School is committed to working with parents/carers and pupils to ensure that each pupil benefits from the academic, personal and social opportunities available to them during their years with us.

The young child, however, is dependant upon the adults in his/her life to get them to school regularly and on time. So the focus in both Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 programmes is to establish good habits and work with parent/carers to improve attendance. In Key Stage 2 we continue to work with parent/carers and start to develop 'self' responsibility in the children. The school operates within a framework of local schools, including the linked secondary schools.

We are, therefore, committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parent/carers.

Aims of the Policy

- ❖ Clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by maintaining good attendance and punctuality
- ❖ Ensuring parent/carers and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- ❖ Ensuring all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and governors understand the procedures
- ❖ The commitment to allocate resources to support the policy
- ❖ Addressing attendance and inclusion issues in the curriculum
- ❖ To recognise and reward pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year

The Law

The 1996 Education Act requires that:

- ❖ All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- ❖ The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school
- ❖ The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- ❖ The school must report to the Local Authority pupils are absent for more than ten days without explanation
- ❖ The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities
- ❖ Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law

Useful Links

DfE guidance

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1099677/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf

Sheffield attendance Guidance

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/schools-and-childcare/attendance/attendance-policy-sept-21.pdf>

Partnership

What the school expects of our pupils

- ❖ That pupils attend regularly, on time and ready to learn
- ❖ That pupils are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment e.g. P.E. kit
- ❖ To report to the office and sign in (with a parent / carer) should they arrive after registration time
- ❖ To tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school

What the school expects of parents/carers

- ❖ To fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day
- ❖ To contact school on the first day their child is absent for any reason
- ❖ To arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible, and to obtain an Authorised Absence Pass from the school if unavoidable
- ❖ To arrange holidays out of school time. Further guidance is offered under the section ***Term time requests for Exceptional Leave*** later in this policy
- ❖ To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school
- ❖ To provide medical proof (eg. text message from a GP, copy of appointment letter, proof of medicine prescribed)

What parents/carers and pupils can expect from the school

- ❖ A broad, balanced education that is dependant on regular attendance at school
- ❖ Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school, and regular encouragement and rewards
- ❖ Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
- ❖ First day contact with parents/carers when absence is unexplained (via text)
- ❖ Prompt action when a problem has been identified
- ❖ Liaison with officers from the Local Authority to assist and support families where needed
- ❖ Regular communication with parents/carers
- ❖ Home visits if school are concerned about a child's absence

Procedures

Registers are a legal document, care must be taken to ensure registers are marked accurately. Attendance of all pupils is monitored and evaluated regularly using the following procedures:

Registration

- ❖ Registration takes place each morning from 8.30 am – 8.40am in class and each afternoon after lunch (lunch times vary for each year group)

❖ Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) in SIMS in the register for each pupil present and an absent mark (N) for any pupil that is absent (if the reason is not known). Any notes received will be placed in the SIMS register.

❖ Office staff will update the registers with any messages from parents / carers regarding a child's absence

Responding to lateness

❖ Pupils arriving in the classroom after registers have closed are deemed to be late. The pupil and parent / carer will need to sign in at the main office where their N mark is amended to L or U and their name and reason for lateness recorded on SIMS or CPOMS

❖ At 9.15 am the pupil is deemed to be Late/absent. Any pupil arriving in school after 9.15am will be marked U. In case of emergency the register shows the pupil is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance

❖ Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.

Responding to absence – criteria for requesting support from the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST)

❖ Home/school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance

❖ Poor overall attendance (e.g. below 93%) and no mitigating circumstances or acceptable reasons for absence provided to school

❖ If attendance continues to give cause for concern strategies will be considered and steps taken in an attempt to improve attendance and punctuality. This could include home visits from school staff, meetings in school with other professionals if deemed appropriate

❖ When a pupil has not attended for 10 school days the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Local Authority.

Children Missing from Education

The Safeguarding Lead is the nominated member of school staff to liaise with the Local Authority's Children Missing from Education Team. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures (**See policy *Children Missing from Education***)

Children in Public Care

The headteacher is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Local Authority's Children Looked After team.

Awards and Rewards

❖ Improved attendance is recognised and rewarded.

❖ Ready to Learn is one of our 6 "R's" (along with Respectful, Resilience, Resourceful, Responsive and Reflective) includes punctuality and attendance. Children can gain stickers towards their "Ready to Learn" badge

Partnership with parents/carers

It is vital that parents/carers are involved in promoting good attendance and punctuality

❖ Regular attendance information is given to parents/carers e.g., individual letters, parent evenings, SEN reviews, induction packs for new families

❖ Parents/carers are encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance or punctuality.

❖ Any concerns or problems raised by parents/carers will be responded to quickly and sensitively by the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Governors

- ❖ Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Head teacher
- ❖ Have a named governor for Attendance (Gemma Murray)
- ❖ Attend School Attendance meetings as necessary

Head teacher

- ❖ Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school
- ❖ Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- ❖ Liaises with the other officers of the Local Authority to implement attendance strategies
- ❖ Works with the Safeguarding and Pastoral Lead Manager to implement targets, review statistics and amend the policy as necessary
- ❖ Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster
- ❖ Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of Children Looked After by the Local Authority
- ❖ Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education

Safeguarding and Pastoral Lead

- ❖ Maintains an overview of attendance and manages the day to day implementation of attendance plans and strategies
- ❖ Liaises with the Head teacher to produce and evaluate attendance statistics
- ❖ Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster

Class teachers

- ❖ Accurately mark registers using appropriate codes promptly following registration, in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- ❖ Add any notes on CPOMS / SIMS if required
- ❖ Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a pupil
- ❖ Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school

Business Manager and office staff

- ❖ Receive, update and maintain accurate class registers in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- ❖ Maintain SIMS attendance database and update on a weekly basis

Authorising Absence

Only the Head teacher may authorise absence.

❖ Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the Head teacher will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.

❖ The school will clearly set out, in its Parent Policy, obligations for parents/carers regarding attendance and punctuality

Absence may be authorised if:

- ❖ The pupil is too ill to attend school
- ❖ The pupil is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- ❖ The pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs
- ❖ The school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority *unless the parents/carers have chosen to send their child to a school which is not within walking distance*
- ❖ The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- ❖ There is a close family bereavement
- ❖ The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence
- ❖ Leave of absence is granted *by the Head teacher* under exceptional circumstances

Absence should not be authorised if:

- ❖ No explanation is offered by the parent/carer
- ❖ No medical proof is provided for a child whose attendance is below 93%
- ❖ The school is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- ❖ The pupil is staying home to look after parents, siblings or the home
- ❖ The pupil is absent on special occasions e.g. birthday
- ❖ The pupil is absent on exceptional term time leave for longer than agreed by the Head teacher
- ❖ The pupil is absent on holiday without agreement under the exceptional leave guidance
- ❖ The pupil is absent unnecessarily e.g. taken shopping, for a haircut

Requests for term time exceptional leave

Parents/carers wishing to take a pupil out of school for a holiday should be actively discouraged. Any leave during term time can only be authorised by the Head teacher under *exceptional circumstances*. If parents/carers wish to apply for term time leave under exceptional circumstances a request form must be completed by the parent/carer, clearly stating what the exceptional circumstances are, and given to the Head teacher for consideration no less than 20 days prior to the requested leave begins. The school will inform parent/carers in writing, within 10 days, whether the leave has been authorised (it should be made clear why a decision has been made and the criteria used should be re-iterated). See **Exceptional leave during term time** policy for full guidance

If an unauthorised holiday is taken consideration could be given to issuing a Penalty Notice (see guidance). At the Head teacher's request the Local Authority will issue the Penalty Notice and inform the school of the outcome.

It is essential that both the Local Authority and the school be consistent so that there can be no allegations of bias or favouritism. If it is seen that the policy is not being applied consistently the Local Authority will not be able to apply a Penalty Notice.

