

TANKERSLEY ST PETER'S CE (A) PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY



'A love of learning developed in a Christian environment'

Aims:

Tankersley St Peter's CE (A) Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure within our vision of a '***love of learning developed within a Christian environment.***'

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives, Tankersley St Peter's CE (A) Primary School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

The Schools Expectations

From pupils:

- They will attend school regularly
- They will arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day

From parents:

- They encourage their children to attend school
- They contact the office between 8.30am and 9.30am whenever their child is unable to attend
- They ensure their child is appropriately dressed, taking account of the school dress code
- They ensure their child arrives in school well prepared for the school day and with homework completed

Pupils and parents can expect the following from the school:

- Designated and regular Point of contact – Family Support Worker, with regards discussing attendance issues
- A nurturing whole family/school approach to resolving attendance issues quickly, with the support of a multi-agency network in place if additional support is required
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and time keeping
- Contact from the school on the first day of absence if no notification has been received via family support worker
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend without good reason and there is a pattern of absences or an excessive number of absences or lateness
- Immediate action on any problems notified to us, in confidence if necessary
- Positive measures to encourage good attendance
- A high quality education

Positive measures to encourage good attendance

- Registers will be completed accurately at the start of each day
- Family Support Worker available, Thursday and Friday afternoons to identify, discuss and advise with regards to attendance issues
- Daily monitoring by class teachers – contact school administrator to raise concerns where appropriate
- Weekly attendance figures shared with all staff including that of all vulnerable groups
- Regular monitoring by the Headteacher on attendance and punctuality
- Certificates awarded to classes with the best weekly attendance and themed lunches for winning class
- Weekly attendance trophy celebrated in sparkle and shine assembly
- Termly 100% attendance certificates and end of year prizes awarded
- Head teacher wrist bands given to Persistent Absentees if attended all week
- Parents breakfast/coffee mornings
- Attendance matters promotional leaflets
- Half termly letters to parents to alert them if child's absence is below 90% to inform them that they have fallen into Persistent Absentee in line with the national requirements
- Persistent Absentee log is updated termly and shared with Head Teacher
- Attendance data report shared half termly with governors and staff
- Refer to EWO where necessary
- Discussion with the Head Teacher, Education Welfare Officer and Family Support Worker where attendance falls below 94%
- Regular reviews and meetings held with parents to identify and resolve any issues

Punctuality/Lateness

Regular and punctual attendance is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their education opportunities. We lay a great deal of importance on the need to be punctual and to arrive in school on time. Not only does it make for a good start to the day but also it shows consideration for every one else in the class and avoids repetition of instructions and teaching. The school day begins at 9.00am and all children who arrive in school after this time will receive a late mark, this will be an unauthorised lateness. Procedures to be followed in the case of persistent lateness may involve the Education Welfare Service.

Medical Appointments

Where a child misses more than half the morning or afternoon because of medical appointments this will be recorded as "authorised absence" in the register. Wherever possible, the school must be informed of any medical appointments. Children will not be allowed to leave school alone during school hours.

Responding to non-attendance and the procedure for lateness

1. If no note, telephone call or text is received from parents, the schools Family Support Worker will ring the child's parent/carer during the morning.
2. With continued non-attendance or lateness the school will write to the parents/carers informing them of the attendance issues and advising the involvement of the Education Welfare Service should there be no improvement.
3. Where there is no improvement in the attendance or punctuality, the Educational Welfare Service will be informed and appropriate measures will be taken.

Parental requests for special leave of absence during term-time

The law requires that children should attend school for 190 days of each year. This means that, unless absent through illness, children should attend school at all times excluding weekends, official school holidays and staff INSET days. Clearly it is in the best interest of the child not to miss days at school if this can possibly be avoided.

If you intend to apply for permission from the Headteacher to take your child out of school during term time as authorised absence, you will be required to obtain a Leave of Absence request form from the Headteacher for authorisation.

If a parent requests special leave for their child through the special leave form the school office will record the child's % attendance on the form. If this figure is lower than 94% then the absence may not be authorised. IF a parent then chooses to go ahead with the special leave a fine could be issued by the Local authority.

The school does not authorise any holidays or breaks in term time – these will be deemed unauthorised.

The Headteacher is only able to authorise a maximum of ten school days' leave in any one academic year in exceptional circumstances. All Leave of Absence requests must be supported by a letter explaining the reasons or from the employer.

Leave of absence will not be considered in the following periods or circumstances:

- During the first half term of a new academic year
- In between February and May half terms due to the timing of SATs
- For pupils who have internal/external examinations/assessments near or during the proposed absence
- If, on granting the request, the pupil's attendance rate falls below the schools attendance target of 97%(This is the current trigger level for consideration to issue a Penalty Notice for poor school attendance).

Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances outside the period and restrictions outlined above due to:

- Parents are restricted in terms of leave from their employer (a signed letter from the employer should accompany the request for leave of absence, setting out the prevailing circumstances).

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under Sec 444, Education Act 1996 or Sec 36, the Children's Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate subject to statutory defences. The Education Welfare Service delivers this Local Authority responsibility.

The issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances of unauthorised absence:

- Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps)
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Leave of Absence in term time
- Unexplained absence i.e. no reason given for absence
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed)
- Excluded pupil present in a public place during the school hours of the school where the pupil is on roll

To ensure consistent delivery of Penalty Notices one of the following criteria must apply:

- Other than in specific circumstances* the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to effect an improvement.
* If a parent is capable of securing regular attendance but not willing to take responsibility or failure to engage with strategies and agencies then a penalty notice may be issued without notification
* No formal warning is given in the case of leave of absence
- The deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not / would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.
- Excluded pupil present in a public place during the school hours of the school where the pupil is on roll without justification during the first five days of each and every fixed period or permanent exclusion and other than in specific circumstances the liable parent/carer will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued after the first time a pupil is present in a public place.
- If a parent/ carer of an excluded child fails to ensure the attendance of the child at the alternative provision provided by the school or LA from the sixth day of fixed period exclusion or permanent exclusion that the parent will be liable under the truancy provisions.
- The LA will not issue a Penalty Notice if no substantiating documentation is provided by the school

Responsibility

In order for this policy to be successful every member of the school community must make attendance a high priority. We must share our enthusiasm for education; communicate its importance to pupils and all members of the school community.

Reviewed September -2016

Next review September- 2017