

Document Control

Author/Contact:	J Khan / E Thornton Tel: 0121 6750618 Email: j.khan@slade.bham.sch.uk e.thornton@slade.bham.sch.uk	
Document Reference:	Attendance and Punctuality Policy	
Version	01	
Status	Final	
Publication Date	July 2017	
Related Policies		
Review Date	Annually: July 2018	
Approved/Ratified By	Trust Board	Date: 18/07/2017 Re-adopted

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims and Objectives
3. Statutory Duty
4. Parental Responsibility and/or day to day care
5. Local Authority Responsibility
6. School Interventions for Managing Persistent Absenteeism
7. School Day/Punctuality
8. Reporting an Absence/First day Absence
9. Authorising Absences
10. Medical Notes and Supporting evidence
11. Roles and Responsibilities in Managing Attendance
12. Monitoring attendance
13. Attendance Rewards
14. Requests for Leave of Absence During Term Time
15. Deletion from Register
16. School Attendance Focused Target
17. Monitoring and Review
18. Relationships to Other Policies

1. Introduction

At Slade Primary School we recognise that regular school attendance is fundamental in raising the standards of education and achievement for all our pupils. We will do all we can to encourage parents / carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any difficulties that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

We will work alongside all our parents to support regular attendance that is well above the national average. We will do this so that we can ensure that our children have the best possible chance to achieve at school.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives and policy are to:

- To emphasize the importance of and secure from pupil's maximum attendance and promote punctuality to enable them to take full advantage of their education opportunities.
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance;
- To communicate to all relevant parties (teachers, parents/carers) the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed "authorised";
- To stress the need for home and the school to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance and punctuality.
- Record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism;
- Promote effective partnership with the Attendance, Compliance & Enforcement service (ACE in Warwickshire) and other services and agencies and follow their standard approaches in managing attendance issues.

3. Statutory Duty

Schools are responsible for recording pupil's attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll. The schools utilises a central administrative system – Schoolpod for this purpose.

4. Parental Responsibility and/or day to day care.

The Education Act 1996 section 7 defines the Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.

(7) The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The Education Act 1996 section 576 defines the meaning of “parent”.

(1) In this Act, unless the context of otherwise requires, “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or (b) who has care of him, except that in section 499(8) it only includes such a person if he is an individual.

5. Local Authority Responsibility

If a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school which he/she is registered at, then the parent/guardian is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at schools, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend can be prosecuted under Education Act 1996, section 444 1A (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000).

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced new powers in relation to issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27 February 2004. Penalty notices must be issued in a manner which conforms to all requirements of the Human Rights Act and all relevant Equal Opportunities Legislation. To this aim each Local Authority has a Code of Conduct in relation to issuing Penalty Notices.

Slade Primary School recognises Birmingham City Council’s ‘Spotlight on Attendance Campaign’ and will implement prosecution where it is fair and equitable to do so.

6. School Interventions for Managing Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ (PA) when their attendance falls below 90% (19 days). All students whose attendance have fallen to this level or are at risk of reaching this level will be closely monitored through the School’s tracking procedure, and regular contact made with their parents/carers. Parents/carers will be given opportunities to work with school in improving their child’s attendance.

There are a number of sanctions that school can take to address the issue of non-attendance. In order to try and identify the reason for absence we will always talk to you first to identify the reason for absence. Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a Leave of Absence in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further absence has occurred following written warning to improve Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Birmingham City Council Code of Conduct.

Where intervention through the ‘Spotlight’ process fails to bring about an improvement in attendance the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under section 444/4441 (a) of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring their child’s attendance at school.

7. School day and Punctuality

Slade Primary School day begins at **8.55am** (Gates open at **8.45am**).

Registration Closes at **9.00am** – (Gates close at 8.55am, after this time parents will need to bring their children to the main reception)

Afternoon Registers are taken at **12.45pm for Reception, 1.00pm for years 1,2,3,4 and 1.30pm for years 5 and 6.**

School day ends at **3.15pm for Reception and 3.20pm for all other years.**

All pupils arriving 10 minutes after the start of the morning session will be coded as authorised late (L code). At each registration session any child not present is marked as absent. If the child subsequently arrives after 9.30a.m. the child is marked as unauthorised late (U code) unless a valid reason is supplied.

8. Reporting absences/First day absence

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform the school by 10 am on the first day of their child's absence. If by 10am on the first day of a child's absence the school has not been notified, the School will attempt to contact the child's parent/carer. If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If by the end of the second day, the school may send a letter of concern to the parent/carer and/or invite them into the school and/or may undertake a home visit. Parents are expected to contact school every day the pupil is absent.

9. Authorising Absences

There are two categories of absence: -

- (i) Authorised (approved)
- (ii) Unauthorised (not approved)

Only the Headteacher can approve absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

- (i) **Authorised Absence**
An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if the child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

- (ii) **Unauthorised Absence**
An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

10. Medical Evidence and Supporting Evidence

We ask that parents making medical appointments for their child, book them early or late in the day, so pupils can be in school for at least half the day.

The school fully supports pupil's welfare and medical conditions and if your child has a chronic, persistent or recurrent health issue, we can arrange for a meeting with parents to discuss what additional support can be offered to help your child to access school however we cannot simply accept parental information without the appropriate medical evidence. Pupils with medical conditions should attend school as per normal unless the absence is supported by medical opinion.

There are of course, good reasons (especially illness), which make attendance at school sometimes difficult. Nevertheless, lessons missed cannot be repeated and "catching up" is never as good as the original learning experience.

The School recognises the need to support pupils during and after long term absence of any kind and will:

- i. Endeavour to provide work for pupils to be completed off-site where appropriate and medical evidence has been received.
- ii. Consider all strategies in partnership with ACE and other agencies to encourage the return of pupils to school. This may include negotiated timetables and/or gradual reintegration.
- iii. Ensure that there is a positive atmosphere within school in which pupils are welcomed back.

11. Roles and Responsibilities in managing attendance and punctuality

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school everyday
- attend school punctually
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children will:

- ensure daily school attendance
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually prepared for the school day
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence and keep in regular contact with school
- contact the school promptly whenever a problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

We expect that our school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, twice daily, including recording pupils late

- monitor every pupil's attendance
- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes authorising the absence
- contact those families whose child's attendance has dropped below 95% on a half termly basis
- encourage good attendance
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment; provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher
- Invite parents/carers to meet in school and discuss attendance and/or punctuality with parents/carers.
- Involve outside agencies where and when appropriate (ACE, Early Help)
- by publishing and displaying attendance statistics

12. Monitoring attendance

Pupils whose percentage of attendance falls below 95% will be reviewed by school staff and parents will be notified by letter. Where attendance continues to cause concern we will write a letter to parents and ask that evidence is provided to justify absences. We may arrange to meet with parents to discuss attendance.

Failure to make an acceptable improvement or where there is an immediate concern further intervention's will be considered.

If difficulties relating to absenteeism cannot be resolved through intervention at school level, then we may refer the pupil to ACE for casework intervention or through the 'Spotlight on Attendance Campaign', inviting parents/carers to discuss their attendance issues. We will notify you if we feel this intervention is needed.

Class Teacher

Attendance 100% - 96%



Class teachers will be provided with a weekly update of pupil's attendance and punctuality.

Action:

Speak informally to parents at the end of the school day and promote school policy for attendance and punctuality.

Promote a welcoming atmosphere following pupil absence.



School Office

Attendance 95% - 92%



School Office will promote first day calling and follow up absences, recording reasons for absence.

Where attendance has fallen below 95% Family Support Worker will send the 'letter of concern', notifying parents that their child's attendance is deteriorating.

The School Office to monitor attendance.

Promote a welcoming atmosphere following pupil absence.



Office Manager

Attendance 92% - 90%



Office Manager and Pastoral Leader to meet to identify patterns of absence.

Where attendance has fallen to 92% School Office to write to parents advising that further absences will require evidence to justify absences. Where reasons for absence are medical, medical evidence will be required for school to authorise future absences.

In some instances parents may be invited to meet with the Office Manager, Pastoral Leader, or Headteacher to discuss attendance and punctuality concerns and refer to appropriate support agencies as needed.

Promote a welcoming atmosphere following pupil absence.



Office Manager/ACE

Attendance 90% & below



Office Manager and Headteacher carryout review.

Where there has been no improvement in attendance a referral may be made to Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) Service and parents will be contacted.

For all unauthorised absences 'Spotlight' may be considered and may result in legal action.

Promote a welcoming atmosphere following pupil absence.

13. Attendance Rewards

Slade Primary School actively promotes and rewards pupils who achieve good attendance and punctuality.

Children will be encouraged to have a minimum of 95% attendance and will be rewarded with a cinema afternoon. Any child achieving between 97% and 97.9% will be rewarded with a bowling trip. At the end of the academic year any children achieving 98% and above attendance will be rewarded with a 'school trip' to which a parent is also invited.

14. Requests for Leave of Absence During Term Time

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant any Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued in accordance Birmingham City Councils Code of Conduct Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

15. Deletion from Register

Pupils will only be deleted from the register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended in the 2016 Pupil registration regulations.

Slade Primary School will follow Birmingham City Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

It is important that if families decide to send their child/children to a different school that they inform our school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from our school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving our school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. Failing to notify Slade Primary School will result in a referral to Birmingham City Council's Children Missing Education Service.

16. School Attendance Focused Target

Slade Primary School expect that children attend every day and on time that school is open. We do not set a PA target.

In September 2015, the DfE carried out a review of the Persistent Absence (PA) levels. This review increased the level from 85% to 90% and updated the methodology for calculating PA. In previous years, a pupil had to amass a set number of absences (previously 57 sessions) before being deemed as PA. However, a pupil is now deemed as PA if they miss 10% of their own individual sessions; meaning all pupils below 90% will be PA regardless of the time of year.

The Ofsted Framework now requires pupils within the bottom 10% attendance to be monitored and for schools to be aware of the reasons for their absence.

17. Monitoring and Review

Achievement against Slade Primary's attendance targets will be reported upon to the Governing Body. The Headteacher together with the Deputy Headteacher will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and procedures and where necessary make recommendations to the Governing Body for improvement.

The school will keep accurate records on file for a minimum period of three years. The absence rates will be reported on the Schools website.

18. Relationship to other Policies

The Attendance policy should be read in conjunction with:

Exemplar:

- i. Guidance on admissions
- ii. Equality Statement
- iii. Keeping Children Safe in Education (otherwise known as safeguarding)
- iv. The Pastoral Policy