

Attendance Policy Stepney Primary School

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Monitoring:	Trust Board

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Introduction

Our vision, underpinned by co-operative values¹, is threefold; to work in partnership with the community we serve to combat social exclusion and deprivation, to build a sustainable and vibrant community and local economy, and to provide learners with a global perspective helping them to become responsible and articulate citizens in a global economy. We will achieve this by delivering the highest possible standards of education, and for this we rely on the performance of all our employees. With this in mind the Trust is committed to providing staff with development opportunities and support.

The success of YHCLT is due to our employees performing at a consistently high level, through a shared passion for teaching and learning, high aspirations for student learning, with each individual continually developing and growing professionally.

Prior to final approval by the LGB, this policy has been the subject of review and suggested amendments have been taken into consideration and changes made where they can be agreed.

1 Aims

The school aims to ensure that:

- we raise awareness amongst pupils, parents, staff and governors of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- we raise and maintain levels of attendance in school amongst pupils;
- we reduce, to minimal levels, the number of unauthorised absences; including late arrivals after registration has closed;
- we address and reduce the number of pupils with persistent absences.

2 Whole School Policies and Systems

We use the computerised registration system, which ensures we are vigilant with our marking procedures and ensures absences are accounted for. In addition we follow local authority guidelines for absence procedures.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Class Teacher

All teachers are responsible for ensuring:

- the register is marked/entered correctly and reasons for absence noted where possible;
- patterns of absence/lateness are noted and brought to the attention of/discussed with the Attendance Officer/Deputy Head Teacher/Head Teacher;
- pupils in their class are encouraged to maintain good levels of attendance and punctuality at all times. This may involve bespoke rewards and incentives in addition to the whole school incentives systems.

3.2 Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher

Is responsible for:

- overseeing and monitoring overall whole school attendance and punctuality;
- having an overview of children with poor attendance/punctuality (especially persistent absences) and discussing any problems with the class teacher and Attendance Officer;
- having access to SIMS to collect information on whole school, class or individual attendances;
- meeting regularly with the School Attendance Officer to discuss poor attenders;
- developing home school links and meeting with parents if there is a concern over a child's attendance;

¹ self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity, honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others

- reporting levels of attendance to Governors and the Yorkshire & the Humber Cooperative Learning Trust (YHCLT).

3.3 Office Staff/Attendance Officer

Are responsible for:

- text/phoning the homes of pupils on the first day of absence where not otherwise informed;
- liaising with the Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher (Weekly) to discuss pupils whose attendance/punctuality is causing concern;
- producing/collating information on whole school, class or individual attendance as requested;
- attending meetings with parents, in conjunction with the Head Teacher/Deputy Head Teacher, when necessary.

4 Procedures for Dealing with Absences/Lateness

We have a leaflet for parents/carers, which briefly outlines our procedures regarding attendance and punctuality and highlights our demand for high levels of attendance and punctuality. It also emphasises the responsibilities of parents to ensure their children attend school and are punctual, as well as explaining the difference between an authorised and an unauthorised absence (see appendix). A copy of this leaflet has been sent out to all parents/carers and is given to all new parents.

- parents should inform the school on first day of absence and give an expected date of return;
- in the event that school is not informed, then it is up to the parent to inform school of the reason for absence of the first day of return to school (this will also be followed up by a first day absence phone call);
- if no reasonable explanation for absence is provided or the reason cannot be substantiated (i.e. via a Doctor's note or prescription or appointment card etc.) this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence;
- where parents wish to take their child(ren) out of school for a holiday, this request must be made in writing to the Head Teacher; although this is unlikely to be granted;
- children who are late before the register closes at 9:15am will still be given their mark; however, those children who are late after the register has closed at 9:15am will be marked as late and this will count as an unauthorised absence;
- persistent poor attendees will be followed up in school by the Attendance Officer/Head/Deputy Head Teacher. Parents of these children are at risk of prosecution and may be liable for a fixed penalty notice (see below);
- medical absences (including dental or hospital appointments) will be authorised on receipt of an appointment card or letter from the surgery etc. However, parents are advised that their child should only stay out of school for the time of the appointment and be in school either side of the appointment time;
- long-term absence, due to ill-health, will normally be accompanied by a medical certificate and may need to be reviewed in terms of provision for continuing the child's education off-site;
- all authorised/unauthorised absences remain at the discretion of the Head Teacher;
- absences of 10 days (Twenty sessions) or more will automatically generate a warning letter indicating to parents that their child's attendance is a cause for concern; Parents will be given fifteen days in which to improve their child's attendance, if there is no improvement a fixed penalty of £60 will be imposed; Parents will then have 28 days to pay this, if this is not paid within the 28 days a further £60 is added making the total penalty due £120; If this is not then paid within the next 28 days the parents will be taken to court;
- the school will fine parents for pupils taking holidays during term time. There will be a £60 fine per adult per child. This means that if both mum and dad take their child on holiday, the mother will be fined £60 and the father will be fined an additional £60, making £120 per child.

5 Rewards and Incentives

As good attendance is regarded as a priority at Stepney Primary, it is given a high profile. This is achieved in a number of ways:

- each term the children with 100% attendance will receive a certificate from the Head Teacher;

- at the end of each academic year children with 100% attendance for that period will receive a certificate;
- each term we have a prize hamper draw for parents of pupils who have had 97% or better attendance for the term;
- each half term, we have a prize draw for pupils who have had 100% for the half term. The rewards include 'love-to-shop' vouchers;
- there are weekly attendance and punctuality class certificates awarded on a Friday;
- various other incentives are organised and offered throughout the year with focuses on punctuality and attendance, these have included 'early bird' raffles etc.

6 Computerised Registration Procedures

Daily Procedures for Teaching Staff/Admin Staff:

Time	Procedures	Person Responsible
8:45	Doors open	Attendance Officer
8:55	Bell goes for the start of the morning session; Staff take register; Children complete registration/morning activities while teacher or other appointed adult completes electronic attendance and dinner register on the computer network.	Class Teacher
1:10pm	Bell goes for the start of the afternoon session, class teachers complete the registers on the Computer network.	Class Teacher

7 Reviewing the Policy

The policy on attendance and punctuality will be reviewed regularly and amended when necessary.

8 Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 replaced and unified all existing equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It aims to ensure that people have equality of opportunity in accessing and experiencing public services. Schools when carrying out their day to day work should have regard to the following:

- eliminating discrimination
- advancing equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations across all characteristics

Schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment. This means it is now unlawful to discriminate against a transgender pupil or a pupil who is pregnant or recently had a baby.

This policy was reviewed and updated with reference to this duty. The author/s of this document considered this policy in the light of these requirements to ensure that Stepney Primary School adheres to these statutory regulations.

9 Person Responsible

Updated Autumn 2020

Paul Browning

To be reviewed Autumn 2021