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Attendance Policy

Every Lesson Counts at Charlton on Otmoor CE Primary School

'not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.' **Hebrews 10:25**

Charlton on Otmoor CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance through discussion, newsletters and end of term reports. School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is designed to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE). Each year the school will formally examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Oxfordshire attendance targets. The school together with governors, will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it, the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Expectations of pupils:

- that they will attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate of 100%
- that they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day
- that they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may hinder them from attending school.

Expectations of parents:

- that they will ensure their child/ren attend school, aiming for a 100% attendance rate
- that they will contact school as soon as it is reasonably practical (e.g. by 9.00am) whenever the child is unable to attend
- to ensure that their child arrives in school well prepared for the school day
- to contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- to refrain from taking the child out of school for holidays, or occasional days, unless there are significant exceptional circumstances

Expectations of school:

- to ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence / absence
- to make early contact with parents when a child fails to attend
- to refer to appropriate support agencies as required
- to communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance
- to give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted

Expectations of governors:

- to monitor the effectiveness of the policy through Headteacher reports
- to support the school in encouraging good attendance through role modelling
- to communicate with parents and other agencies as appropriate
- to nominate members for the attendance panel if appropriate

School Procedures related to attendance:

1. Any child who is absent/present from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their mark recorded as being authorised (/ \), unauthorised (O) or as an approved educational activity (V) (attendance out of school).
2. Only the Headteacher, or a member of staff acting on their behalf, can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

1. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.45 am. The registers will remain open for 20 minutes.
2. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed / significant weather affecting roads
3. In cases where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered. (M) The afternoon registration will be at 1:00 pm. The registers will close at 1:10 pm
4. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers close.
5. Parents/Carers must inform the school if their child is going to be absent on or before the first day. If no information regarding the absence of a child has been received by 9.00am, the office will telephone the parent to check the reason for absence.
6. When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Medical/Dental appointments must be accompanied by written confirmation.

Authorised absence

- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from the parents that the child is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence.
- If the child has a medical appointment with a healthcare professional (e.g. doctor or dentist) that cannot be made outside school hours, this will be considered as an authorised

absence. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents. Parents must request the period of absence or inform the school in advance.

- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the school procedures then this will be an authorised absence. An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents give a reason, if the absences are persistent. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request confirmation from the GP that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. The school monitors all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately. Unauthorised absence Absences will not be authorised if the following occur:

- Unexplained absence
- Any absence that is not considered by the headteacher to be as the result of exceptional circumstances Persistent Lateness If a child arrives after the register has closed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the lateness is occurring on a regular basis and parents/carers fail to work with the school to address the issues, the matter can be referred to the County Attendance Team who will offer support.

Holiday absence

- Requests for absence for holidays during time will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances. Parents will be expected to write a letter outlining these exceptional circumstances. If the school refuses a holiday request, but the child is still taken on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. No absence will be authorised during statutory testing weeks.

Response to non attendance

- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the school will use the contacts list provided by parents.
- Where there has been no response or explanation, the school will post a letter to the parents/carers requesting information regarding the absence.
- Where there continues to be no response to the school intervention and the absence has persisted without explanation, the school will refer the issue to the County Attendance Team If a child's attendance slips below 90%, the school will initially contact parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the Head will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance Team if appropriate.
- If the child is repeatedly late, the school will initially contact parents expressing concerns about late arrival and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the Head will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance Team if appropriate.
- If the child is a Young Carer, the school monitor attendance and lateness and support where appropriate, taking into account the unique nature of each situation.
- In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between school and parents, with the support of the County Attendance Team, the school will refer the matter

formally to the County Attendance Team and, where necessary, legal proceedings may be instigated. Penalty Notices and Legal Action Where a pupil's attendance is giving cause for concern, the school will contact parents/carers to address any issues that are causing non-attendance. The school works with the County Attendance Team when the situation requires additional support and when necessary the County Attendance Team may initiate legal proceedings on behalf of the Local Authority. The Law The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states: The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable- [a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and [b] To any special needs he/she may have. either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school. In cases of persistent absenteeism, the school reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice Warning which could result in a referral to The County Attendance Team to issue a fine or take further legal action through the courts. A Penalty Notice is a fine that the County Attendance Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system. A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- they fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a six week period;
- they allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without the school's authorisation;
- they fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence;
- their child persistently arrives late for school after registration is closed. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully by the school and a parenting contract meeting will be offered between parent, pupil and school to try and help resolve any issues. PA cases maybe referred to the County Attendance Team and if necessary, they have a range of legal powers open to them to enforce attendance including parenting orders, education supervision orders and prosecutions. If convicted of an offence a parent could face a fine of up to £2,500 per parent and/or 3 months imprisonment Supporting good attendance
- Attendance data will be checked termly (six times) by the Attendance Team to identify any issues.
- Attendance will be discussed at regular staff meetings where staff will have the opportunity to express any concerns.
- The school will work closely with the County Attendance Team in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the school.
- The school will evaluate the success of the procedures by measuring the annual attendance % against their target at the end of the year, and their progress towards attaining the target in February.

SUMMARY

Through the implementation of the policy, the following will be achieved:

- a minimum of 96% attendance
- a positive partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning

- clear and transparent procedures and expectations understood by all stakeholders

Approved by: Jo Stocks/ Emma Wykes

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