

THE
ACORN FEDERATION
LONG LANE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL
MARSTON MONTGOMERY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Policy written – March 2020

To be reviewed – March 2021

Attendance Policy

At the Acorn Federation, we are very fortunate to have supportive and friendly parent bodies. Our parents recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

We want to ensure that all our pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their true potential. We will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, where every member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

We believe that good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the educational and social skills which will equip them for life. As parents, you are under a statutory obligation to ensure that your child receives a suitable full-time education, and we are responsible for monitoring attendance and informing the local authority if we have any concerns.

We aim to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy where staff, pupils and parents can work in partnership. We monitor attendance and work to solve quickly any identified problems. However, the local authority can prosecute parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance, and the Courts can impose heavy fines.

We work with pupils and their families to ensure each child attends school regularly and punctually, encouraging good attendance and will liaise with families and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right. This attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

We aim to:

- promote good attendance as the norm
- help **every** pupil to reach their maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in their school life
- demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school
- establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

To achieve this we plan to

- help pupils to be more aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- improve communication with parents in relation to their child's attendance
- recognise and support the key role of all staff in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- follow Derbyshire's Policy to improve attendance of looked after children
- Set annual attendance targets in line with the local authority and our targets.

Rewards for good attendance

- At the end of one term pupils with 100% attendance are rewarded with a certificate.
- Pupils with 100% attendance for two terms are rewarded with a certificate.
- Pupils with 100% attendance for three terms are rewarded with a certificate.
- At the end of every term pupils with 98+% attendance are rewarded with a sticker.

Responsibilities:

The school governors are responsible for monitoring the operation of this policy, and deciding whether to request the local authority to take steps to enforce it.

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- the attendance policy and organisation of a regular annual review
- the organisation of rewards for good attendance: termly and annual rewards
- supporting staff in monitoring and dealing with problems
- monitoring and informing the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) of any concerns
- supporting families and individual pupils in sorting out any problems working against good attendance, and in helping to set and achieve targets with regard to attendance where necessary
- publicising the attendance record for each school for parents.

The class teacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that the registers are completed accurately at the beginning of each session
- ensure absences are reported to the school administrator if no reasons known
- ensuring that the school administrator is aware of any absence
- discussing patterns of absence of the children in their class with parents
- liaising with the Head Teacher with regard to any concerns regarding attendance
- ensuring that the delivery of the curriculum is challenging, interesting and stimulating so that children want to attend regularly
- ensuring (in conjunction with their colleagues) that the ethos in the class, the school and the Federation is supportive of good attendance

The School Administrator is responsible for:

- contacting the family on the first day of absence for reason of absence if this is unknown
- reporting back to staff
- keeping the Head Teacher informed of any difficulties
- producing figures for attendance statistics required by the Head Teacher and the Department for Education.

Parents are responsible for:

- informing us if your child is going to be absent and to provide an explanation for the absence
- making sure your child attends regularly and punctually, unless prevented by illness or medical appointments
- letting us know as soon as possible about any illness or reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

You have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend the school they are registered at on a regular, full-time basis. Allowing children of compulsory school age to be absent from school without good reason is an offence. Persistent absence may result in the school having to inform the local authority.

Any problems over attendance should be discussed with us at an early stage. It is every parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure that your child attends school, arrives on time, is properly equipped, suitably dressed and has a positive attitude to learn.

Family Holidays and Other Absences

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came into force on 1st September 2013. This states that the school **may not** grant any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases it is the Head teacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

If you need leave of absence for **exceptional circumstances,** you must inform the Head Teacher as soon as possible and at least two weeks before the anticipated start date. If you take your children on holiday without permission, you will incur an unauthorised absence for your child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Service.

The local authority has the power to issue a fixed penalty notice of £60 against each parent, which rises to £120 if not paid within 21 days; there is no right of appeal against a penalty notice. The local authority can prosecute if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made. The Court can impose a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court may also make a Parenting Order.

In the case of separated parents the parent / side of the family taking the child(ren) on holiday may be issued the penalty notice.

Examples of Authorised Absence

- Medical/dental appointments
- Approved PE/sporting activity
- Days of religious observance in the religious body to which the parents belong
- Absence for theatrical/other performances following discussion with the Head teacher.
- Sickness
- School educational visit
- Educated off site
- Music exams
- Special Family Circumstances i.e. bereavement or sickness of another close family member.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider 'reasonable' and for which no 'leave of absence' has been granted. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (e.g. to go shopping, birthday, day trips)
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which are not properly explained
- Holidays during term-time for which no leave of absence has been granted

PROCEDURES

We will apply the following procedures to manage attendance and punctuality.

- Registration will take place at the start of each morning and afternoon session.
- Class teachers will inform the school administrator immediately of any absent pupils where no reason is known.
- Where no explanation is available from home on the first day of an absence, the school will attempt to contact parents on the numbers they provide. This will be done as soon after the start of the school day as is possible.
- If the school administrator is unable to get a response on the telephone, they will send a text message asking parents to contact the school.
- Attendance records are be stored on the school's Information Data Base (i.e. RM Integris).
- The school administrator will inform the class teacher of any known absence.
- For absences beyond three days, you must contact the school again to tell us the reason for the continued absence. If this does not occur, contact may be made with home by the office staff.
- Pupils' attendance figures, including Unauthorised Absence, will be recorded on their annual report. We send details on attendance, both authorised and unauthorised, to the Department for Education.
- If a pupil arrives at school after the registration period, they will be regarded as **'late'** and this will be registered by the School Administrator.
- The governors continuously review attendance and will ask the Head Teacher to monitor any child whose attendance is less than 90%. You will be informed by letter if this occurs. This may result in a referral being made to the School's Education Welfare Officer if attendance is 85% or below.

The Governors are responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.

We are sure that all parents and carers, will help us with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support.

Please contact the school office if you would like to volunteer to be more involved in school life, as a parent helper, a member of the Parent and Friends Association or School Governor. We value and welcome your contribution, however large or small.