



ATTENDANCE POLICY	
Reviewed by:	Andy Marshall – Deputy Head Pastoral
Review Date:	September 2023
Next Review due:	September 2024

Attendance Policy

Rationale

Staff and governors at Ballard believe that in order for pupils to be successful they need excellent attendance.

At Ballard, we believe good attendance is important because:

- high attendance helps prepare pupils for the responsibilities of adult life in the workplace;
- statistics show a direct link between under achievement and absence below 95%;
- pupils with a high level of attendance make better progress, both socially and academically;
- high attenders find School routines, School work and friendships easier to cope with;
- high attenders find learning more satisfying; and
- high attenders are more successful in transferring between sections of the School and higher education, employment or training.

Although good attendance is defined as 96% or above in an academic year, Ballard is committed to increasing the number of pupils achieving 100% attendance. Our aspiration is that all pupils attend School all of the time. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our School so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent School attendance and punctuality for all.

Similarly, punctuality to School and to lessons is fundamental to academic and other successes. Pupils should therefore be in School unless they are too ill to attend, are on a pre-agreed holiday of short duration or in rare cases, where family circumstances are such that they cannot attend for a short time, for example in the case of bereavement.

High attendance and punctuality are important factors for all our pupils and this includes our new pupils on a probationary period. In order for pupils to pass a probationary period they must ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Objectives

- Registers are accurate and personal details are kept up to date;
- To promote attendance and punctuality;
- To ensure that all members of the School community understand their role in promoting good attendance and punctuality;
- To recognise good attendance and punctuality;

- To challenge persistent absence, working proactively with pupils and parents where attendance is below 90%; and
- To support pupils returning to School after extended periods of absence.

Promoting Good Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the School, parents and the child. The home/school agreement contains details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance on our website and in the Headmaster's frequent letters;
- Report to parents on how well each pupil is performing in School, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their achievement; and
- Reward good attendance by celebrating individual achievements.

Regular Reviews of Attendance

Every half term, at the Pastoral Team meeting, the Head of Section should review pupils with less than 95% attendance and in particular, those whose attendance is less than 90% attendance. At this stage there will be a review on an individual pupil basis to evaluate any changes in their attendance figures. The form tutor and Head of Section can then praise, cajole or encourage as necessary.

Form tutor comments in reports must always refer to attendance and our overall goal of 95% attendance. The reports will show authorised and unauthorised attendances as a percentage.

Tutors and Heads of Section must encourage good attendance frequently. This undoubtedly influences pupils' resolves to attend School.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Pupil is responsible for:

- Attending School on time (we expect pupils to be in their form room by 8.30am daily). Any absence or lateness must be with the consent of a parent. A pupil arriving in School after the registration period (8.30am – 8.40am) must go to the Main Reception Office in the main building to be signed in by the office staff. Signing out in the carpark when leaving at 4.00pm (Years 6 to 11) or by the junior canopy (Years 3 to 5); or attending the correct activity/prep at 4.15pm. Failure to do so will lead to a demerit detention the following day;
- Reporting to Reception to see the School Nurse if they are unwell. They should never contact parents directly before seeing the School Nurse or Head of Section;
- Attending each lesson on time;
- Registering at the Main Reception Office if a formal registration period is missed due to an appointment. There must be an absence request online or hardcopy, email, or a note from parents to explain the absence;
- For afternoon registration a pupil, who, for any reason, does not register with their class teacher or form tutor, must go to the Main Reception Office to be signed in; and
- Following School procedures if they need to leave the site before 4.00pm.

The **Parent** is responsible for:

- Supporting the School's positive ethos on attendance. This includes ensuring their child is not absent for key events listed in the School calendar, such as examinations;
- Ensuring their child arrives punctually for School;
- Reporting attendance via My School Portal (MSP) using either the 'Report School Absence' or 'Request for Authorised Absence' forms. Please provide a copy of the appointment letter and/or signed note from home to Main Reception so that any absence can be recorded correctly. If at all possible, we ask that parents accompany pupils into Main Reception to sign out and sign in;
- Avoiding holidays during term time. If a parent wishes to seek permission from the Headmaster to take their child out of School during term time, they should complete a 'Request for Authorised Absence' form, via MSP in advance;
- Providing clarification of their child's absence on the same day by 9.30am latest, via email or phone call (01425 626901);
- Alerting the School to any concerns which might affect their child's attendance or punctuality;
- Giving the Form tutor/Main Reception Office the address and telephone number of the temporary person with parental responsibility if they are away during term time; and
- Check your child's attendance using the parent portal. If an N is present in the Register, please inform the School of the reason for the absence.

The Form **Tutor and Co-Tutor** is responsible for:

- Attending form time punctually to meet and greet pupils;
- Ensuring the pupil feels welcome in the form group and has a positive start to each School day and arranging for cover if aware of absence;
- Taking a register during tutor times. Tutors must use the afternoon Tutor time to double check with their pupils for inaccuracies in their registers, paying particular attention to any 'N's recorded. Note: after 5 days an N will become an O (unauthorised absence);
- Monitoring punctuality; informing Head of Section of any concerns. Communicating these concerns as agreed with Head of Section to parents by telephone/email, and reinforcing this in the annual School report as appropriate;
- Praising each pupil with good attendance and punctuality and those pupils whose attendance and punctuality has improved;
- Requesting absence information from pupils and parents and annotating the register weekly, using the Future Absence tab in the Registration Module in iSAMS. All absences must be accounted for by an email or phone call from the parent on the same day of absence. The reason given for the absence must constitute an 'authorised' reason; if in doubt the Form tutor must liaise with the Head of Section before authorising the absence. The Form tutor will annotate the register for any reasons given for absence;
- Where no clarification of absence is provided by a parent, the Main Reception team will contact the parent and notify the Head of Section. The Main Reception team will annotate the register accordingly and sign with initials;
- Promoting and monitoring punctuality. If a pupil is late to registration on three occasions without good reason, they will receive a break or lunch time detention with the Form tutor; and
- Monitoring patterns of absence and punctuality as reported in the weekly report. If a pattern is noticed, the Head of Section should be notified. When a pupil's attendance gives cause for concern, the Form tutor may be instructed by the Head of Section to record the

absence as 'unauthorised' even if a note is provided. Any absence notes received from parents of these pupils should be passed to the Head of Section; and

- Encouraging pupils to access the co-curricular programme using SOCS.

The **Subject Teacher** (Years 3 to 11) is responsible for:

- Ensuring pupils feel welcome to lessons (meet and greet);
- **Taking a register at the beginning** of the lesson and following up on any punctuality issues (e.g., with a call to parents and reporting if needed);
- Responding to absences of pupils who have been highlighted as cause for concern or vulnerable, and any patterns of absence amongst other individuals or groups of pupils. This will require reporting their absence via email to all staff and then informing the Head of Section of any truants;
- Setting work for pupils, as requested, but particularly for pupils who are absent for any length of time due to long-term illness or exclusion, via Microsoft Teams and OneNote;
- Ensuring pupils make up work missed through any absence, including unauthorised absence or lateness, and liaising with Head of Section regarding work for truancy detentions;
- **Encouraging** prompt movement and good behaviour between lessons by supervising in corridors at the start and end of lessons; and
- **Ensuring** pupils stay in class for double lessons, avoiding toilet breaks to be taken, unless in cases of emergency (i.e., medical conditions and exit passes). Pupils will only be allowed to go to the toilet one at a time and not within the first or last 10 minutes of a lesson.

The **Head of Section** is responsible for:

- **Reviewing** the daily 'Missing Registers' report, which will highlight any gaps in registration; this must be addressed and completed **by 9am next day**. A persistent 'N' that has not been resolved within 5 working days, must be recorded as unauthorised absence code 'O';
- Setting a good ethos within the year groups, which will encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- Monitoring overall patterns of attendance and punctuality for the year groups, by using the 'Week View' tab within the Registration Manager in iSAMS, and reviewing the weekly printout for each tutor group and overall statistics for their year groups;
- Inform the Deputy Heads of attendance issues;
- Undertaking regular classroom visits;
- Carrying out a review of attendance at the Heads of Section's weekly meeting with the Deputy Head Pastoral, and responding appropriately where concerns exist. Responses may include; meeting with the pupils to set targets; writing home; a telephone call or a meeting with parents;
- Providing information to all staff on pupils where attendance and punctuality to lessons have been identified as a cause for concern;
- Setting up intervention groups to address poor punctuality and low attendance (including persistent absence);
- Acting promptly on any causes for concern; e.g. by speaking to the pupil, contacting home, referring to the Deputy Heads;
- Ensuring that the Form tutors are fulfilling their responsibilities, by knowing exactly what is expected of them and have the skills to carry this out. This also includes the induction of new Form tutors. The Head of Section is also responsible for challenging poor practice, in consultation with their Line Manager, the Deputy Head Pastoral;
- Notifying the Form tutor and Main Reception Office of the names of pupils whose absence should be recorded as unauthorised, regardless of any absence note provided; and

- Monitoring all unauthorised absences, including that which the Form tutor has not authorised, at the request of the Head of Section. In addition, at the end of the Spring Term, the Head of Section must review all unauthorised absences.

The **Deputy Heads** are responsible for:

- Ensuring good practice;
- Ensuring that the terms of this policy are regularly observed at all levels; and
- Ensuring consistency of practice across school

The **Board of Governors** is responsible for:

- Monitoring this policy and reviewing attendance figures on a termly and annual basis so that absence is minimised and each child achieves the best possible academic and other success as described in the school aims.

The **ELSA Staff, VMT Staff, School Counsellor** are responsible for:

- Keeping a record of pupils attending their sessions and inform Reception.

The **Main Reception Staff** are responsible for:

- Ensure AM and PM registration periods are monitored for missing registers and send a report to teachers by 10am for AM Register and 3pm for PM register;
- Follow up and complete any inaccurate registration codes, once evidence has been provided either by the Subject Teacher, Form tutor or Head of Section;
- Support the PE Department in completing accurate registration records, including days when children attend offsite sporting activities;
- Update Out of School and Future Absence records, based on the information submitted by Parents and Guardians via MSP;
- Ensure all pupils sign out using the pupil signing out book, located in the Main School Reception;
- Alert the Heads of Section or Deputy Heads of any persistent patterns of absence observed in pupils; and
- Update registers for pupils who have attended approved on-site activities - VMT lessons, ELSA and counselling sessions.

Recording Attendance

Legally the register must be marked **twice** daily. This is once at the start of Lesson 1 (8.45am - 9:34am) and again at the start of Lesson 5 (1.40pm – 2.29pm) .

In addition, every class teacher will take a register at the **beginning of each lesson from Years 3 to 11**. Nursery to Year 2 will take an AM and a PM register.

Punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons are used to make announcements, give out instructions or organise work. If pupils are late, they can miss work, time with their class teacher getting vital

information and cause disruption to the lesson for others. In turn, this can be embarrassing, leading to possible further absence.

The School day begins with morning tutor time at 8.30am and all pupils are expected to be in School by this time. Morning tutor registration closes at 8.39am.

All lateness is recorded daily. Detentions will be set for persistent lateness without a valid reason (i.e., three late arrivals).

For any arrival after 5 minutes of the start of the registration or lesson period, will be marked as late (L) with annotation of the register to explain the reason.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'; parents will be advised that, where possible, doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school hours or during the school holidays.

Parents, guardians, or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good timekeeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the School, discuss the problem and have support offered.

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013. Pupil registration (England) regulations state that:

'Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the School, the absence will be unauthorised.

Registration Codes

The School uses the national codes to record attendance and absence in a consistent manner to enable Heads of Section and Deputy Heads collect statistics and monitor pupils' patterns of attendance.

1. Present Codes

1.1. Present - '/' Code for AM - '\ Code for PM

The pupil is on the School premises under the care of Teachers or in Music Lessons.

1.2. Late arrival before the register is closed

Used when the pupil arrives late, but within the registration period for the lesson registers are open for 30 minutes after the lesson begins. Teachers and Tutors will take a register at the beginning of every lesson. All pupils are expected to arrive on time for the start of their lessons. Code 'L' will be used regardless of whether the absence is justified. A pupil arriving after the first 30 minutes of the lesson should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence if it is more appropriate.

2. Authorised Absence Codes

2.1. Supervised Education Activity - 'B' Code

Attending an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the School and supervised by someone authorised by the School. Examples are:

- attending taster days at other schools;
- attending courses at college;
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged or agreed by the School.

2.2. Authorised Absence granted by the School - 'C' Code

Authorised absence will be granted entirely at the Headmaster's discretion in the following circumstances:

2.2.1. Absence through participation in public performances, including theatre, film or TV work and modelling - 'C' Code

Parents of a child performer can seek authorised leave of absence from School for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headmaster to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether the education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Please note that the DoF legislation sets out that a local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance.

2.2.2. Pupils subject to a temporary part-time timetable - 'C' Code.

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

2.2.3. Teenage Pregnancy - 'C' Code

Support will be directed to keeping a pupil in School and, wherever possible, her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth. A pupil who becomes pregnant will be allowed no more than 18 weeks authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence will be treated as unauthorised.

2.3. Excluded from School - 'E' Code

Code 'E' will be used for pupils excluded from School, when their name is still entered in the admission register.

2.4. Holiday Leave - 'H' Code

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence for family holidays, should complete the Request for Authorised Absence Form on MSP.

Holiday absence requests will be reviewed by the Headmaster on a case-by-case basis. Holiday absence will be recorded as unauthorised using Code 'G', unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case code 'H' will be used.

2.5. Illness (not medical or dental appointment) - 'I' Code

Parents should notify School on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness, using the 'Reporting School Absence' form on MSP. Where it is clear that a child will be away from School for over 15 days due to long term illness or other health needs, the Pastoral team will continue to support these pupils to minimise impact in their education, such as a reduced timetable or remote learning provisions.

2.6. Absence through interviews - 'J' Code

If a morning or afternoon session is missed when a pupil attends an interview, the School can authorise this absence. Advance notice is required and the code 'J' should be used on the register. If a pupil fails to return from a morning appointment and misses registration, the afternoon absence should be marked as unauthorised unless an explanatory note is received.

2.7. Medical or dental appointment - 'M' Code

Parents should notify School of scheduled doctor or dental appointments, using the 'Request for Authorised Absence' form on MSP. Pupils should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs to be recorded for that session.

2.8. Absence through competing at a regional, county or national level for sport - 'P' Code

Parents with children with able sporting ability can seek leave of absence from School for their child to take part in a regional, county, national, international and some other events and competitions. It is however, down to the Headmaster's discretion whether to authorise this. Permission for a child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence should complete the Request for Authorised Absence Form on MSP.

2.10. Study Leave - 'S' Code

We believe that pupils' needs are best met if they attend School every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, and pupils will be expected to attend School in the usual way. Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 pupils after the Summer half-term and during the time of the GCSE examination period. Even then, study leave will be allowed on a lesson-by-lesson basis, after they have completed the last examination for each subject. In other words, pupils are expected to attend lessons in a given subject until they have completed the final exam for that subject. A study room will be provided for pupils, if they or their parents wish them to remain in School.

The School will work within the legal requirements, namely that:

- Study leave will be granted only to Year 11 pupils and never to those in other year groups;
- Study leave should never exceed 15 school days in a year, and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself;
- Study leave should always be granted sparingly, taking account of an individual pupil's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study;
- Any pupil has the right to attend School during study leave, and a parent has the right to insist they do; and
- Any sessions given to pupils as study leave, has a statistical meaning of authorised absence (it is not an 'approved educational activity' as it is unsupervised), and will be recorded and reported on by the School as such.

2.11. Educational visit or trip - 'V' Code

Code 'V' is used for organised visits or trips, including residential trips organised by the School, or attendance at a supervised trip, which take place during the session for which it is recorded. The School will record a pupil's absence from the trip using the relevant absence code.

3. Unauthorised Absence Codes

3.1. Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period granted - 'G' Code

Please refer to section 2.4 on holiday request above. The School reserves the right to not grant leave of absence if parents take their child out of School for the purpose of a holiday during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances, and on a 'case by case' basis, the Headmaster may grant leave of absence, using code 'H'. The School cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively if the parent did not apply in advance.

3.2. Reason for absence not yet provided - 'N' Code

Where a child is absent from registration without reason, the teacher will record the register with an 'N'. When the reason for absence has been established, the School should record the pupil's absence using the relevant code. Form tutors must monitor the use of 'N' codes at the end of each school day to establish the reason for the absence, and replace the 'N' with a more appropriate code.

Code 'N' should not, therefore, be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, this code will be replaced with Code 'O', unauthorised absence.

3.3. Absent without authorisation - 'O' Code

This code will be used where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is an authorised absence.

3.4. Arrived in school after registration closed - 'U' Code

Please refer to 1.1. Code 'L'. Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed (30 minutes after the lesson begins) and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.

Understanding Types of Absence

Pupils are expected to attend School every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- Authorised Absence is when the School has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised;
- Unauthorised Absence is when the School does not accept the reason given for the absence, has not received a reason for absence, or has not approved a child's leave of absence from School after a parent's request. This includes:
 - Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings;
 - Truancy before or during the school day; and
 - Absences which have not been explained.

The School can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to the parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but, on return to School, there is evidence they have been on holiday.

When a Pupil is Absent

On the first day a child is absent, we will contact home with a phone call by 11am if possible.

If contact is made and a reason for absence is established, a decision will then be made whether or not to authorise the absence. The situation will then be monitored closely, with further contact home as appropriate.

If contact is not established, ongoing efforts will be made to make contact. On the third day of absence, if the child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, the School is required to start the Child at Risk of Missing in Education procedures, as set down by Hampshire County Council. We will write to parents at the last known address to tell them this is happening. We will also make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family. We may even try visiting the family home.

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent, without an explanation, for ten consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, the Local Authority will be notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

If a child has had an absence, and their attendance level is falling towards 90%, we will contact parents and, depending on the reasons for the absence, may issue a letter of concern; the Head of Section or Form tutor may meet with the child and set a target for improvement.

If a pupil on a Child Protection Plan, a Looked After Child, or any other particularly vulnerable child is absent, staff will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will make a decision about next steps.

Home Education

If a parent requests that their child be removed from the School roll because they intend to home educate, they will be asked to confirm the request in writing. The Headmaster will send a copy of the letter to the Hampshire Education Inclusion Service (EIS) and remove the child from roll, once appropriate checks have been made by EIS.

Legal Measures

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child, of compulsory school age, at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the School.

Where a child has unauthorised absence, the School will follow the Hampshire's Code of Conduct for securing good attendance.

Record Preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least three years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Success Criteria

We will know that this policy is effective when:

- Overall attendance is at 95% and above;
- The number of pupils with 100% attendance is increasing year on year;
- The number of pupils with 98-100% attendance is increasing year on year;
- The number of pupils with attendance below 95% is reduced year on year;
- The number of pupils with unauthorised absences is reduced year on year; and
- The level of Persistent Absence is reduced year on year.

Registration Codes

Code	Description	Attendance Type
\	Present AM/PM Including Music Tuition (VMT) and Drama Performances	Present
L	Late but within registration period (30 minutes from the beginning of the session)	Present
B	Off-site education activity, supervised and authorised by School, including taster days at other schools and colleges and work experience/placement	Authorised Absence
C	Authorised absence, including reduced/part-time timetables. At the discretion of the Head and Leadership	Authorised Absence
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence
H	Authorised absence for the purpose of a Holiday. At the Head's discretion and, in exception circumstances	Authorised Absence
I	Illness	Authorised Absence
J	Interview. Prospective employers or College	Authorised Absence
M	Medical or Dental appointment	Authorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity with an external provider	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
V	Including conferences, school trips	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday recorded as 'Unauthorised Absence'. In most cases, unless granted by the Head	Unauthorised Absence
N	Reason for Absence not yet provided – must disappeared within 5 days of inputted. After 5 days must become an 'O'	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised Absence. After 5 working days of 'N' is automatically recorded as an O	Unauthorised Absence
U	Arrived in School after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
Y	Exceptional circumstances and emergencies	Internal Code
X	Non-compulsory school age. (Pre-Prep)	Internal Code
#	School Closure days	Internal Code



Ballard Pupil Attendance

Thank you to parents for their work in securing pupils' good attendance.

There is no doubt that pupils need to have good attendance if they are to be successful at school. Good attendance is defined as 95% or above in an academic year. Similarly, punctuality to school and to lessons is fundamental to academic and other successes. Pupils should therefore be in School unless they are too ill to attend or, in rare cases, where family circumstances are such that they cannot attend for a short time, for example in the case of bereavement.

Good attendance is intertwined with good pupil behaviour and effective teaching and learning. Equally pupils with poor attendance tend to fall behind with their work and can struggle to catch up. They often have more difficulty making friends. Poor attendance can also lead to poor behaviour. All our experience tells us that pupils with good attendance are happier, better behaved and more successful – and not just in school!

We will continue to use electronic registration to track punctuality and attendance lesson by lesson. This means that we telephone parents if their child is not in School. Where parents have not already contacted us to explain an absence, either by phone or use of the school portal, we will try to telephone them before break to clarify the reason for absence.

Family Holidays

The law relating to family holidays during term time changed from 1st September 2013. In the past, headteachers had been able to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time for up to ten school days per year. Since September 2013, the law has made it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is then for headteachers to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Medical Appointments

We ask parents, where possible, to arrange medical or dental appointments outside school hours. If it does need to take place on a school day, we ask that, if the consultation is local, pupils do attend the rest of the school day. Of course, some medical appointments last longer and a lengthy journey is sometimes necessary; in such cases it would be unreasonable to expect your child to attend any part of the school day.

Signing out for Appointments During the School Day

For safeguarding and health and safety reasons, any pupils leaving the site must sign out at the Main Reception Office.

We ask that when an appointment is made in advance via the 'Request for Authorised Absence' from My School Portal or by phoning Main Reception as soon as possible.

Sometimes an appointment is made after the child has left for School, in which case there will not be a note in the logbook. In such cases we ask parents to phone the School as soon as possible and the Main Reception staff can sign the logbook.

First Day Absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, preferably by calling the absence line on 01425 626901;
- Send an email/phone call in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us.; and/or
- Or you can call in to School and report to Main Reception.

If your child is absent we will:

Telephone, text or email you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you; this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

Third Day Absence

If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you after three days of absence, the School is required to start a child missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council. We will write to you to tell you this is happening.

We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquires to known friends and wider family. We may even try visiting your home.

Ten Days' Absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

So please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

My Child is trying to avoid coming in to School. What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend School. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the School, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter, and may make things worse.

Contact your child's form tutor or Head of Section immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding School for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying,

friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend School, and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

Legal Measures

1. In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age, at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the School.
2. Where a child has an unauthorised absence, the School must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing a Penalty Notices, or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document which ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority.

Legal Measures for tackling persistent unauthorised absence or lateness

3. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:
 - The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance;
 - The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.
4. The following legal measures are for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:
 - Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
 - Parenting Orders
 - Penalty Notices
 - Education Supervision Orders
 - Prosecution

Mr Andy Marshall
Deputy Head Pastoral
August 2023

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