



Swanmead Community School

School Ethos and Direction Policy G

Attendance

Document history:

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Review Timescale		2 Years
Version	Last Reviewed	Next Review
3	July 2020	July 2022
Changes made at last review?		Yes
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Checked by:	Allocated Member of the Governing Body	

For approval by:

Full Governing Body	
Signed by the above:	
Date:	22.07.2020

Summary of changes:

Date of change	Nature of change
20.07.2020	Strategies for Improvement – Attendance Officer <i>Removal of EWO and inclusion of 'further intervention and support'</i>
20.07.2020	Illness, medical and Dental Appointments <i>Removal of Education Welfare Officer</i>
20.07.2020	Penalty Notices <i>Removal of Education Welfare Officer</i>

Rationale

- Regular attendance is the basis for success at school. Swanmead Community School seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her potential.
- The school strives to provide a welcoming, caring, inclusive environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. School staff will work with pupils, their families, and the Education Welfare Service, to ensure each pupil attends school regularly.

1. Aim

- All pupils will achieve target levels of attendance. The school target is 96% (2019/2020)

2. Strategies for implementation

All staff

- Promote the importance of regular attendance.
- Be good role models in terms of punctuality and attendance

Office staff

- Receive phone calls from parents regarding attendance and record in detail the reason given for the absence on the appropriate forms for the Attendance Officer to use.
- Provide holiday forms for planned absences.

Tutor

- Record absences accurately using either SIMs or a paper register.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer regarding individuals' attendance.
- Monitor weekly attendance from the data provided by the Attendance Officer.

Attendance Officer

- Contact parents if no contact is made before 10am.
- Check attendance mobile for any texts or voicemails.
- When appropriate, the Attendance Officer will arrange meetings with parents to discuss an action plan on how to support the child and family.
- Liaise with Outside Agencies and other local schools.
- Monitor pupils' lateness.
- Create letters where attendance is a concern.
- Produce weekly data regarding each tutor groups' attendance.
- Meet with Senior Teacher/Headteacher to discuss any concerns with specific pupil attendance or whole school attendance issues, regularly.
- Complete any referral forms for children who have left Swanmead and for those families who require further intervention and support.

Head Teacher

- Action any requests for holidays during term time.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer to monitor patterns of attendance.
- Monitor absences half termly by meeting with the Attendance Officer.

- Monitor attendance through the use of the weekly data produced by the Attendance Officer.
- Be the final person to send a letter to parents regarding serious concerns about absences.

3. Rewards

- At the end of each term, pupils with 100% attendance will be recognised in reward assemblies with a postcard which will be taken home to show parents.

4. Parental Obligation

- Under *section 7 of the Education Act 1996*, parents have an obligation to ensure that their child receives efficient full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that he/she may have.
- They must therefore ensure that their child has regular attendance at school while they are of compulsory school age.
- Parents must ensure that if their child is absent due to illness or medical issues, for five or more days, then a letter from the GP or Consultant must be provided as proof of absence.
- Parents must contact the school before 9am on the first day of absence to state the reason for that absence. This must include specific details of their child's illness or the absence may be unauthorised. Contact with the school can be made either by leaving a voicemail or text message on the school absence phone (07518 393118), by sending an email to the attendance officer (DEHarvey@educ.somerset.gov.uk) or by calling the school office.
- Parents must inform the school **in advance** if their child is not going to be at school due to a medical appointment, funeral or term time leave.

5. Pupil Obligation

- Pupils are required to attend school on time and to arrive at registration, punctually.
- Pupils must sign in at the Main Office if they arrive to school after 8.55am.

6. Governors

- There is a requirement by law to identify problems relating to pupils' school attendance. The Governing Body of the school, and the Head Teacher are obliged under *Section 434 of the Education Act 1996 and the Supporting Regulations, Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 1995* to maintain an admissions register for all pupils at the school.
- Under Section 42 School Standard and Framework Act 1998 Governing Bodies are required to publish figures relating to school attendance as part of their annual report. The Governing Body is also required to report such figures to the Local Authority.

7. Registers

- All tutors are responsible for completing registers in accordance with the school's SIMs registration procedures.
- This is a legal document and must be completed with care to ensure accuracy and avoid errors.

8. Term time leave

- Term time leave is where the school has given approval in **advance** and can only be taken due to **exceptional circumstances** which are deemed acceptable **by the school**.
- Term time leave must be requested in advance, using the term time leave form.
- Term time leave will only be authorised in cases, which are deemed exceptional circumstances by the school.

9. Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments

- Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is an authorised absence; however, parents should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. The school must be informed in advance of any appointments that result in the child missing the start of the school day, an absence text will be sent if this is not done.
- Pupils are required to bring a letter, or note in the planner, to school giving reasons for leaving school if the appointment is later in the day.
- Pupils must always "sign-out" at the Main Office when leaving school for appointments.
- A record of pupils leaving or returning to site is kept at the Main Office: in case of an emergency. Pupils must report to the Main Office on arriving late or leaving early.
- If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, the Attendance Officer can consult the school health service or the pupil's GP.
- For children who have sustained periods of absence due to illness, work will be provided when appropriate and a plan will be put in place for their reintegration if necessary.

10. Authorised Absences

- **Days of Religious Observance:** This is authorised absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance, including religious festivals.
- **Exclusions:** A pupil excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school.
- **Traveller children:** To help ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller Children, dual registration means that the school will not remove a Traveller Child from the school roll while they are travelling; this is authorised.
- **Family Bereavement:** The school will respond sensitively to requests to attend funerals of close family members or associated events and has the discretion to authorise such absences.
- **Young Carers:** In a genuine crisis, the school can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made. A time limit will be set for the absence and some schoolwork set so the pupil does not fall behind while at home.
- The HUB will make contact with the family at the earliest possible opportunity and a referral to outside agencies will be done sensitively.
- **Family Prison Visits:** The school should authorise requests for absence that will enable the child to visit his or her parent in prison.

- **Special Occasions:** The school will consider each request individually. Only exceptional occasions warrant leave of absence. For example, attending the wedding of a close family member would be acceptable but a day out of school for a pupil's birthday or for shopping would not. The school will also take into account; the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one-off or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's overall attendance pattern.

11. Persistent Absence

- Persistent absence children are those who have reached/missed the following number of sessions, authorised and unauthorised, by the end of each half term. Each day consists of two sessions.

Term Number	Term End	No. of sessions for 85% PA	No. of sessions for 90% PA
1	October Half Term	12	8
2	Christmas	23	15
3	February Half Term	32	21
4	Easter	39	26
5	May Half Term	48	32
6	Summer Holidays	59	39

12. Penalty notices

- Swanmead Community School does follow the attendance legislation set by the Government (1st September 2013).
- 20 continuous sessions of unauthorised absences (10 full days) or more and no other absences = Penalty notice is issued (£60 per parent per child). E.g. Two parents with two children = £120 per parents = £240 in total.
- 10 continuous sessions (5 full days) or more of unauthorised absence and other absences which cause the attendance percentage to be 96% or lower = penalty notice issued (£60 per parent per child e.g 2 parents with 2 children = £240.)
- 10 intermittent sessions (5 full days) in 12 weeks = possible Warning Penalty Notice or referral to Educational Welfare Service.
- A Warning Penalty Notice is monitored by the Attendance Officer for three months and 15 days. If no further unauthorised absence is accrued, no further action is taken at that time. If it is failed, a Penalty Notice is issued.

13. Persistent Lateness

- As a school we have a legal obligation to close the register 30 minutes after morning and afternoon registration. If a pupil arrives at registration after 8.55 they will be given a late mark.
- If lateness becomes an issue, further action will be taken and the EWO will be made aware of the situation.
- If a pupil arrives after the registers have closed (9.25am), and this is not due to a medical appointment, they will be given a 'U' code which

indicates an unauthorised absence. If this is a regular occurrence then the pupil can be required to make up their time at the end of the day.

14. Deleting pupils from the school roll.

- A pupil can be removed from school roll if moving to another area or school; if they are being home educated; and if they have been permanently excluded or die.
- If a child moves to another school then the parents are expected to inform the school in advance that their child is moving school and if possible which school they will be attending. A child will only be removed from our roll once their new school has requested their records and have confirmed their first day attendance.
- If a pupil doesn't return to school or leaves without leaving any forwarding information then the Attendance Officer should make as many enquires as possible including contacting parents, siblings' schools, friends or relatives. This information must be put on a 'Children Missing in Education' form and sent to Missing Children at County Hall. This child must remain on roll until the Local Authority confirms they have been found and can be removed.
- If a parent chooses to home educate their child then the attendance officer must complete an 'Elective home Education Form' and send it to the Elective Home Education Team at County Hall along with a copy of the parental letter, removing their child. The school should then wait for confirmation before removing the pupil from roll.

15. Other Agencies

The following agencies will also become involved as appropriate:-

- Education Welfare Services
- Traveller Education
- Children's Social Care
- County's Missing Children

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Attendance is monitored on a daily basis for each pupil via the tutor and Attendance Officer.
- The Attendance Officer will:
- Inform tutors of their tutor group's attendance weekly; this data is also given to Head teacher.
- Meet half termly with the head teacher, to review the effectiveness of the procedures and determine any necessary future action.
- Review the progress with the Head teacher and member of the Senior Management Team following the completion of the whole school data for the DfES which is completed in May.
- The head teacher will:
- Monitor and evaluate the policy within the school's self-evaluation processes.
- Provide data to the school Governors.
- Ensure that liaisons take place between all involved parties