

THE CANONS C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Adopted March 2016

This policy has been accepted by The Canons CE Primary School Board of Governors.

Signed
Chair of Governors

Head

Date: _____

1 AIM

Canon Maggs C. E. Junior School is committed to providing a full and efficient 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.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by our Attendance, Compliance & Enforcement Service (ACE).

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and local authority attendance targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving it's set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets and the steps taken by the school to address regular non-attendance.

2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The *Education Act 1996* states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- (a) To his/her age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) To any special educational needs he/she may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory age-

- (a) When he/she attains the age of five, if he/she attains that age on a prescribed day, and
- (b) Otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following him/her attaining that age.

A person ceases to be of compulsory age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year-

- (a) If he/she attains the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- (b) If he/she attains that age on that day or,
- (c) (unless paragraph (a) applied) if that day is the school leaving date next following him/her attaining that age.

3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Body

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff
- Annually review the school's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and children to implement the policy effectively
- Nominate or identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance
- Ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is compiled with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children and staff
- Work out appropriate and accurate annual attendance numbers and future attendance targets, and submit these to the LA within an agreed timescale each year
- Take time at governor's meetings to review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year
- Ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organizing that data, including for children who are educated off-site
- Ensure that they are clear on how to analyse attendance data and how to communicate the findings effectively to parents and staff
- Use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance coordination and target set for the future.

School Leadership Team

As part of the whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement
- Coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full policy review
- Ensure that all staff are up-to-date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation, and that staff are fully trained to recognize and deal with attendance issues
- Ensure that government legislation is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them
- Nominate or appoint a senior manager to take responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to this job
- Report to the governing body each term and the lead governor for attendance half-termly on attendance records, data and provision
- Ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively

- Develop multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend
- Document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings.
- Celebrate good attendance though naming weekly class high attendance figures on the weekly newsletter, producing termly 100% attendance certificates to individual pupils and through end of years awards to individual pupils with excellent attendance.

Teachers and Support Staff

As part of the whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- Be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- Ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- Ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue
- Ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily
- Contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed
- Work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance

Parents and Carers

As part of the whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- Engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- Promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- Encourage and support their children's aspirations
- Follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (see section 4) and include an expected date for return
- Do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- Use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- Keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance

- Enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine./ It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance
- Do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the head teacher (see section 4)
- Sign a home school agreement

Pupils

As part of the whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents, and the school timetable
- Speak to their form or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable
- bring a note of explanation from their parents or carers to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen
- follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late (see section 4). Pupils are held responsible for this and it is made clear to all pupils what this procedure is by their form tutors. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance, and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation
- sign a home-school agreement

4 Procedure for Reporting Absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences. Only the school can authorise absence, a note or explanation from parents does not guarantee authorisation.

Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to inform the school by **10 am** of their child's absence and provide a reason for this absence.

Generally, notifications of illness are recorded as authorised absence (unless the pupil is part of the target group and parent/carer has been asked provide doctor's note etc). If we have not received a reason for absence by **10 am** the office staff make contact with parents/carers to confirm the reason for the absence. If we are unable to make contact the absence remains unauthorised.

Fifth Day of Absence

If a child has been absent for 5 consecutive days without a reason being either given by the parent/carer or being obtained by the school then a letter is sent. This letter asks the parent/carer to contact the school immediately to give a reason for the absence.

Continuing Absence

If a child continues to be absent for 10 consecutive days and there has not been a response to the first letter, then the Local Authority will be contacted by submitting a referral in line with the CME procedures. This is a legal requirement and links into our safeguarding policy.

Frequent Absence

The Head teacher and Learning and Pastoral Support Manager regularly review any pupil attendance which is of below 95% for that academic year. A letter is sent out for each pupil with an attendance figure of 93% and below when identified at Attendance review meetings (unless there is an exceptional known reason for their absence, e.g. period of hospitalization, recovery from a serious illness etc.

These pupils are then placed onto a monitoring list and records are kept in the main office along with copies of all letters sent.

After 4 weeks the monitoring list is reviewed at attendance review meeting between school staff and ACE team.

- If attendance is above 93% the child is removed from the target list.
- If attendance has improved but is still below 93% the child remains on the monitoring list for review in 3 weeks time.
- If attendance has not improved a further letter* notifying parents of the attendance percentage is sent and the child's name remains on the monitoring list.

*Once this letter is sent all lates for that child and any medical reasons for non-attendance (unless proof has been seen i.e. doctor's note/letter, appointment card) will be recorded as unauthorised. This is explained to parents as part of this letter.

After a further 3 weeks the target list is again reviewed.

- If attendance has consistently improved (or is above 93%) the child's name is removed from the target list.
- If attendance has fallen further and/or remains a cause for concern the pupil will be discussed with Headteacher and ACE team to consider a way forward which could involve a meeting with parents.

If, following a meeting with the ACE team worker and the Head teacher the child's attendance does not improve a referral may be made to the ACE Team.

If a child continues to have a pattern of poor attendance and is seen to be regularly on and off the monitoring list their case will be discussed with the ACE Team.

Persistent Absence

From September 2015, the DfE is now highlighting any pupil with attendance below 90% as a Persistent Absentee.

In line with this, our policy will be to review on a regular basis those pupils in this category. Notification letters are sent to parents of pupils under 90% half termly. These pupils are then monitored and further letters are sent to parents to advise progress.

Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day of absence. When the child returns to school they should bring a note from their parent explaining the absence – this is for the school records. For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

Authorised Absences

There may be some instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement.

Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The head teacher/ form tutor/ subject teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

Family Holidays and Extended Leave

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice.

- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents may be subject to further action by the school or prosecution by the local authority.

Religious Observance

Parents may apply for leave of absence for days of religious observance related to the family religion. We ask that, if you are likely to need to do this, that you inform the school and give as much notice as possible for the exact dates required.

Late Arrival

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at **8.50am**. The registers will remain open for **25 minutes**. Any pupil arriving between **8.55 am** and **9.15 am** will be registered as **L**. Any pupil arriving **after 9.15am** will be registered as **U** (which is an unauthorised absence) unless there is an acceptable explanation e.g. school transport was delayed. In case's for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at **1.15 pm**.

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 before registers close.

On our regular attendance review meetings, minutes late reports are produced and pupils of concern are discussed. This may result in a 'late' letter being sent to parents or an invitation to a meeting in school with the headteacher to discuss ways of improving the situation. Their case may be discussed with/referred to the ACE team. Persistent unauthorised lateness may result in legal action.

Strategies for promoting good attendance & punctuality

The Canons uses a variety of strategies to encourage good attendance including:

- Best Class attendance shield given to Upper School on a weekly basis.
- Best class attendance bear given to Lower school on a weekly basis.
- Attendance board located in a central part of the school to display best class attendance
- Weekly newsletter publishes winners of class attendance.
- Certificates for 100% attendance given out termly.
- End of year 100% and excellent attendance (99%) given out in end of year assemblies.
- Pupils attendance figures published with annual academic reports.
- Praise letters sent to pupils who had been cause for concern and now showing improved attendance.