FIVE RIVERS CHILD CARE LTD

Attendance Policy & Procedure – Field Gate School

'Five Rivers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'

Policy Owner	Head Teacher
Authoriser	Head of Education
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Aims
- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality at School.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality within school.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

Promoting regular Attendance:

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.
To help us all focus on this, as a school we will ensure:
- Individualised interventions are in place to improve punctuality.
- A curriculum is provided which is creative and meets the needs of the pupils. This is reviewed regularly
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes school and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged and Looked After pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.

Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required. If attendance is a concern, a safeguarding notification will be completed on Clearcare and sent to the DSL, who will follow up and will be dealt with as such.

Expectations of Parent/Carer
- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.
- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours.
- Contact school preferably by **8.30am** on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.

- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Unacceptable reasons for missing school include - general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays.

If a pupil is absent we will
- Telephone and text the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 10am.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised school will involve other agencies such as Social Care and/or Police. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited into school to meet with the Headteacher. The meeting is designed to offer support and guidance.
- If absences persist we will raise as a safeguarding concern and liaise with the relevant agencies.

Understanding types of Absence

School will record every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence.

Authorised Absence

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. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:
- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

Persistent Absence

- Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.
- Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.
- Low attenders will also be discussed at the weekly safeguarding meeting held for each school.
- If after one week no contact has been made the school will contact the local authority.
- After two weeks (10 school days), if the school have had no sight or contact, a phone call will be made to the police to carry out a welfare check. Authorisation will be sought from the Head of Education

Why Regular Attendance is very important:

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

If the attendance of an individual is to be of concern, a formal meeting will be held with the manager and the young person to discuss appropriate interventions necessary. The social workers and/or parents will also be informed.

On a monthly basis, attendance figures are sent to the Head of Education for data collection. A check is made that all absences have a reason entered. Any letters regarding absence are kept with the register. Reports are sent to stakeholders each half term and a monthly report is written for the Senior Management team, including attendance data.

Upon returning to school after a period of absence it is important that all adults involved with that child are positive and welcoming. Some may need sympathetic handling on their return.

If a pupil is absent for a prolonged period or fails to return from a holiday the school will follow the normal procedures for investigating pupil absence (i.e. telephone calls, letters, invitations to meetings at the school etc).
If the child does not return to school the matter will be referred to the Local Authority.
If a pupil 'disappears' without any warning the school will immediately notify the Local Authority.

A CME form will be completed by the school when:

- The school has been informed that a child is moving out of area but the details of the new school are not provided.
- The school has been informed that the child is moving out of area, details of the new school are provided but after 15 days, no confirmation has been received.
- A pupil has 10 unauthorised school days with no notification as to why and no contact can be made with parents/carers.

There are strict rules on when schools can delete pupils from their Admissions Register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments.

When a pupil is deleted from the Admission Register the school will clearly indicate the date and the reason for the removal from roll and the Local Authority will be notified.

School, in liaison with their allocated Local Authority will fully co-operate with any investigation into cases of non-attendance at school.

The commissioning authority's agreement to removal from roll will always be sought

School will monitor all deletions from school roll by race, ethnicity, gender, SEN and disability to ensure that we are fulfilling our obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001).

If a pupil is resident of another Local Authority, it is the school's responsibility to notify the Local Authority that pupil resides in of any of the circumstances above.

Leave of absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable**.**

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 9.30 and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. Doors open at 9.30 to accept pupils into school.

Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register which is 10am, the school will contact parents and any other agencies involved with the child to arrange a meeting about the next steps.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the school who will offer support to resolve the problem.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The headteacher is responsible for encouraging good attendance, seeking out reasons for absence, keeping the register correctly, and for referring any concerns to relevant stakeholders

Appendices
Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance
Whole School Approach

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	**Pupils**	• Arrive on school site for 9.30 • Be in class on time
		• Completed attendance registers • Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks are input on to the attendance register • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before xxxxx) • Ensure reasons all late arriving pupils information are inputted on to the register • Messages sent to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence and also pupils who arrive late. • First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no text message/phone call has been returned. • SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits • Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the First Day contact systems. • Daily Attendance/ Late pupils / PA are reported SLT.
		• Safeguarding home visits as required. • Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families. • Phone call contact with pupils/parent/carers • Home visits • Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to pastoral staff.
	Senior Leader	• Safeguarding requirements. • Liaison with Pastoral staff and Curriculum Leaders regarding support work with identified pupils