

# **PATTERDALE C OF E SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

This policy was drawn up by up by E.V.Stewart and the curriculum committee.

Adopted November 2011

To be reviewed November 2012

Signed

(Chair of Governors)

Date

**Our school will offer an environment in which the pupils feel valued and welcome.**

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Parents and carers**

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.

If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is going to be late, parents are requested to notify the school by 9.30 am on the same day and each subsequent day of absence – by phone call or message, and followed up in writing or by a personal visit to the school, on the child's return.

### **Pupils**

Pupils will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level.

### **Governors**

Attendance will be an agenda item at the first Governors' meeting after the completion of the previous term. The head teacher will report to the governing body at this meeting highlighting progress against the school's Improvement plan.

The Governing Body has nominated the Curriculum Committee to work alongside the Head on attendance issues.

An attendance summary and action plan for the following year will be incorporated in the prospectus.

### **School**

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.

Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff), who will respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care.

A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received.

All unaccounted for absences will be promptly investigated, and parents and pupils will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.

Pupils and/or parents who experience difficulties with regular attendance will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from the head teacher.

External support services such as the Education Welfare Service, through the Family Support Worker, will support school and families when attendance becomes a concern. The school recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of safeguarding issues, and recognise their duty of care in connection with this.

Attendance issues will be given the highest profile through the Parent's Evenings, Governors, AGM, School prospectus, Newsletters, letter prior to commencing school etc.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registers will be taken punctually each day at 9.00 am and at 1.00 pm.

Registers will be closed at 9.15 am. Pupils arriving between 9 am and 9.15 am will receive a black late mark. A pupil arriving after the register has been closed will receive a red late mark, which indicates unauthorised absence for that session, where there has been no advance notification from the parent/carer.

### **Authorised absence**

Absence will be authorised for:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments, but wherever possible these should be made outside school hours.
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances

### **Unauthorised absence**

Absence will not be authorised for:

- shopping trips
- looking after family members
- domestic chores

- birthdays or similar events

### **Approved education activity**

Pupils will not be deemed absent when out of school to take part in official:

- sporting activities
- educational visits

**NB** When categorisation of absence changes, the School Administrator advises staff accordingly.

### **Holidays in term time**

Parents are strongly encouraged to avoid booking family holidays during term time.

Parents may request leave of absence, however it is at the discretion of the school as to whether the time off will be authorised, and only then in exceptional circumstances.

If leave is granted, parents must appreciate it is their responsibility to ensure their child catches up with any missed work on their return.

Parents should apply to the school on the appropriate form for permission at least 10 school days in advance of any such holiday.

Before granting any leave of absence the school will give consideration to:

- the pupil's previous attendance
- academic progress
- any examination commitments

### **FOLLOWING UP LATENESS AND ABSENCE**

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to contact the school by 9.30 am on the first day of all absences, and where possible to give a return date. Where this is not possible the parent/carer should keep in regular contact with school.

If a pupil is absent regularly, or apparently unnecessarily, the school will contact parents/carers to notify them of the school's concern and to emphasise the parent/carers' legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance.

If a pupil is persistently absent and the school's effort to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the LEA Education Welfare Service.

Pupils who are absent through sickness, or any other unavoidable cause, for an extended period will be supported in continuing their education at home

where this is possible, and will be supported in re-integrating back into school on their return.

### **PROMOTING ATTENDANCE**

Within the confines of the National Curriculum, pupils will be offered a varied, flexible and rewarding education matched to their individual needs. They will not be able to take full advantage of this unless they attend regularly.

The school will employ a range of strategies, sanctions and rewards to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

Attendance data will be collected and analysed regularly, and combined with an annual review of the school attendance policy will inform future practice and school targets which will be set out in an action plan to be shared with parents and carers.

Consultation between the school and Education Welfare Service will be arranged to support and set targets for poor attenders in partnership with parents, and other external services will be made known to parents where appropriate.

Regular liaison between feeder primary schools and secondary schools will identify pupils who may require extra support during the transition into Year 7.

### **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

The school's policy is based on Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act which states,

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

- a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- b) to any special needs he may have,

either by attendance at school or otherwise."

Failure to do so is a strict liability offence (Section 444(1), 1996 Education Act) with a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine per parent per child.

Where parents are shown to have known that their child was out of school without leave of the Headteacher and that they "without reasonable justification" failed to cause the child to attend, they may be found guilty of a higher offence with a maximum penalty of £2500 per parent per child, and/or 3 month imprisonment (Section 444(1A), 1996 Education Act).

Parenting Orders requiring parents and carers to attend parenting skills sessions can also be applied to both offences.