‘Pupil Friendly’ Less Formal Attendance Policy

Why Do We Have an Attendance Policy?

In England, schools must follow the law. The law for school attendance is ***The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*** and it says we must have an Attendance Policy (a document that tells you why and how we do things) and take a register twice a day, once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

The policy explains why coming to school is important and what happens if you don’t attend. It also tells you how we will help you and your family to make sure you can come to school and learn.

Another law that must be followed is ***The Education Act 1996*** which says that all parents or adults that live with children must make sure their children (5-16 years old) go to school or access education in another way.

Why is Attending School Important?

- **Learning:** School helps you learn important skills you need for when you are an adult, like reading, writing, and math.
- **Friends:** You get to make friends and play/hang out with them.
- **Future:** It helps you prepare for your future, so you can do any job you want.
- **Skills:** You learn skills that help you understand the world around you and you can also learn what things you do and don’t like to help you decide what job you’d like when you are older.

What if you are late for school?

- **Register:** You must attend every registration session unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed with a member of staff.
- **Late:** If you arrive after the register has been taken, but before the register closes, you will be marked as ‘Late’ (be careful as you may get a consequence for this). You must sign in when you arrive, so we know you are there in case of emergencies.
- **Absent:** If you arrive after the register has closed (the time will be set by the school) you must be marked as **absent.** This means you do not get the credit for being there and your attendance level will be affected.

What Happens If You Don’t Attend School?

- **Missing Out:** You might miss important lessons and fun activities that would make it easier and happier to be in school.
- **Help:** If you’re not at school, we will talk to your family to see how we can help you come back and/or attend school more often.
- **Trouble:** If you miss too much school without a good reason, your family might have to pay a fine or go to court – we want to stop that happening!

How Do We Look After You?

- **Check:** If you’re not at school, we will call your family to make sure you’re okay. We will offer support if it is needed too.

- **Visit:** Sometimes, we might visit your home to see how we can help because it's important that you know we care about you and miss you.
- **Notice Patterns:** We look for patterns in your attendance which tells us we need to talk to you/your family to see if you need help to be in school more regularly.

How Will We Help You?

- **Support:** We will help you to learn and attend, especially if you find school less easy or if you're feeling unwell.
- **Safe:** We want to help you feel safe and happy at school, talking to you helps us do this but please let us know if you have anything you feel unsafe about.
- **Senior Attendance Champion:** This person makes sure that all the staff in school know it's their job to help children to attend school. They make sure those people notice if you are absent and that they offer help to you so you can come to school with the support you need.

What if you're unwell?

- **Sometimes:** It's okay to miss school if you're very unwell. We will help you return to school once you are better.
- **Most of the time:** Even if you're not feeling 100%, you can often still come to school, and we can support you to do this by making some changes if needed.
- **Always:** We will make sure you know we miss you and we will keep in contact with your family to help wherever we can.

How Do You Know If Your Attendance is a Concern?

- **Patterns:** If you miss 10 school sessions (a morning or afternoon) within 10 weeks (which could be 5 whole days in a row, or 5 days spread over a few weeks, or even 10 half days (maybe where you are late to school frequently) we will start to be concerned.
- **Talk:** We will talk to your family about what help is required to improve your attendance. Your teacher/tutor may talk to you too if you are old enough, and your parents may receive emails or letters telling them we are worried. They may even be asked to come to a meeting in school to talk more deeply.
- **Persistent Absentee:** This might be something you hear in conversations if you have a lot of time off school. It means you have missed 10% or more of school time, which may mean you need help to catch up with your work; 10% could look like you being absent a day per week for the last 5 weeks.
- **Severe Absentee:** If you miss half (50%) of your time in school, you will be classed as 'severely absent' which is very worrying and you may need lots of extra help to learn when you are in school.

What Can You Do About It?

- **Talk to Us:** Tell an adult at school if you're finding it hard to come to school.
- **Use the Help:** We can help you and your family get support from doctors or other people who do helping jobs if you're unwell or if you or your family need other types of support

– but it's important you have an open mind and try things if they are put in place to help you 😊
- **Plan:** We can make a 'plan' together to help you to feel less worried and come to school more often. Part of that plan will also be making sure the things that are being used to help you are working.

Tips for Improving Attendance

- **Routine:** Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Did you know your brain and body need at least 9-10hrs sleep per night to rest and mend from the day?
- **Prepare:** Get your school things ready the night before and don't use your phone or games console within 2hrs of going to bed (it stops you sleeping!).
- **Talk:** Let someone know if you're worried about anything at school, there is almost always something we can do to help you.

Recognition for Good Attendance

We want to recognise the effort that you put in to being in school as we know it is not always easy to do. Some ways we might do this are below:

- **Certificates:** Although not everyone is motivated by certificates, we use them sometimes to let you know that we are proud of your effort!
- **Positive Points:** You can earn points for your class, house or team – and points often mean prizes or rewards!
- **Activities:** Fun activities are often used as rewards for trying hard to improve your attendance level, and/or for groups of children who achieve good attendance.
- **Well Done:** We will make sure you know your effort has been noticed by having a conversation with you to say well done!
- **BIGGEST REWARD:** You make the most of all the opportunities school can bring you. You see your friends daily. You can enjoy your favourite lessons (we know that not all lessons can be your favourite but it's important to be thankful for the lessons we do love!). You can feel proud of yourself for your effort, determination, grit and resilience for doing your best, which is all anyone can ever ask of you, and your future YOU will thank you for it when you are an adult, we promise!

Your voice as a pupil at one of our academies is important to us. If you have any feedback on this policy (maybe suggestions of other positives that coming to school can give that we have missed out, or other help or support that you'd like to see in place) let us know.

Together, with conversations, we can make sure that school is a good place to be!