



River Beach Primary School

Attendance Policy

Approved: September 2018

Review date: September 2020

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Attendance Policy

Good school attendance is a high priority at River Beach Primary School and we are proud of the actions and interventions that we have in place to achieve this. We recognise the importance of monitoring school attendance figures and how we are accountable to the Local Authority and Ofsted for them. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is not enough for the school to assume that regular attendance is automatic and that absence is always an indication of home difficulties or lack of parental support. As a school we are committed to the idea that education is a life-long activity and thus the ethos of the school is that we wish all pupils should be happy and **want** to attend school so that every child may receive every chance every day.

1. Rationale

- 1.1 A broad and balanced education is necessary for every individual to ensure that they achieve their full potential. Regular attendance at school is a pre-requisite of a good education. The curriculum is carefully planned assuming full attendance. Any child who does not attend school is placed at a disadvantage and life chances are therefore impaired.
- 1.2 The school recognises that it is the parents'/carers' legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school and teachers will play their part in ensuring maximum attendance of children at school.
- 1.3 Regular attendance and good punctuality reflects commitment, maximises potential educational achievement, and presents a positive public image for the school
- 1.4 Truancy/unauthorised absence represents a significant waste of educational resources, puts children 'at risk', contributes to general disaffection and potential juvenile crime and thus should be a source of grave concern to parents/carers and teachers alike.

2. Aims

- 2.1 To enable maximum pupil attendance through valuing and praising high attendance rates
- 2.2 To encourage pupils to develop habits/routines that will ensure good punctuality and attendance beyond their school days.
- 2.3 To encourage pupils to take good advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly.
- 2.3 To recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and work in partnership with parents/carers and the PEI/other agencies to address any difficulties.
- 2.4 To provide an effective and efficient system for the monitoring of attendance.
- 2.5 To identify patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and work with the child, parents and other agencies to resolve any personal/social/academic difficulties.

3. Practice

- 3.1 The procedures for the completion of attendance records are that class teachers complete electronic registers and submit them to the school office within half an hour of the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions, and office staff then makes contact with parents on the first day of any unexplained absence.

- 3.2 During the first term all parents are sent an information leaflet on attendance. Any child joining after September receives this as part of a welcome pack. This leaflet also gives information on Fixed Penalty Notices and the implications to parents for being served one.
- 3.3 Class teachers are expected to keep accurate records of attendance, and office staff follow up absences and refer concerns to the Deputy Head and Assistant Head teachers for each phase.
- 3.4 Year leaders receive an attendance report every fortnight detailing individual children who are currently below 96% within their year group. This is then taken to the weekly year group meeting and individual cases are discussed and interventions planned if appropriate.
- 3.5 The Attendance Team meet at least fortnightly to analyse attendance across the school and follow a clear procedure when attendance drops:
- 3.6 Class teachers, the Assistant Head teachers or Deputy Head Teacher make contact with parents either by phone or via an informal meeting.
- 3.7 All children who are below 96% attendance are included on a monitoring list produced by the Attendance administrative officer. This highlights current attendance and indicates as to whether the attendance is showing an upwards or downwards trend. The Attendance Team meet regularly to discuss this list and identify any children at risk of becoming low attendees. Appropriate interventions are then put into place.
- 3.8.1 A letter is sent to parents when attendance falls below 90%, and often before this, regardless of reason for absence. Where there is specific reason (hospital visit, bereavement, and holiday early in the academic year) discretion may be used in not sending a letter but contact should be made via a telephone call to ensure parents are aware and to establish any support strategies that can be agreed. If a child has an illness lasting 4 days or more, then a form of medical evidence will be required.
- 3.9 A monitoring letter is sent to parents when the number of 'lates' to school reaches 5.
- 3.10 Where letters have been sent, and an improvement in the child's attendance is not evident, the Attendance Leader will usually contact the parent/carer by telephone to discuss the absence and offer reasonable support/advice in improving attendance. This may also involve discussions with the child.
- 3.11 If a child arrives in school more than 30 minutes after the registers have closed, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- 3.12 If a child is absent without authorisation for 10 sessions or more without explanation, or takes an unauthorised holiday, the PEI will be informed immediately and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued or court action taken. If a child's attendance continues to cause concern after intervention from the school, then the school will refer the family to the PEI via an A6 referral form. The family will then be contacted by the Educational Welfare Officer.
- 3.13 When 'lates' reach 20, a referral may be made to the PEI.
- 3.14 Requests for absence from school for holidays will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances and these are only at the discretion of the Head teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. Parents will also be asked to provide appropriate documents to support the requested absence.
- 3.15 The Attendance Team will use the school's Sims system to monitor unauthorised absence, patterns of absence, lateness and absence of siblings. The Attendance Admin Officer will manage the system to ensure records are up to date, correct codes are entered and first day contact made, as well as generating a weekly monitoring list showing upward or downward trends for specific children.
- 3.16 The Education and Inspection Act 2006 places a statutory duty on the Local Authority to establish the identities of children missing education.

- 3.17 If a child fails to start at school, enquiries should be made with Admissions to establish whether the child will be starting. The Admissions Assistant should also attempt to contact the family. The PEI team should be informed by the Attendance Leader. If a CTF file has been received by the school it should be uploaded to the S2S website.
- 3.18 When a family disappears, or a child ceases to attend, for ten school days, without explanation, every effort will be made to trace the child by the school. Where the child's attendance is low, the absence unexplained or unusual, or the child is deemed to be 'at risk', immediate contact should be made with the PEI.
- 3.19 Any unexplained, continuous absence of any child who is subject to a Child Protection Plan must automatically be treated as the highest priority and the duty team of social and caring services contacted immediately.
- 3.20 Children can only be taken off role when contact has been made by the receiving school and the CTF file transferred. All other reasons (disappearance, moving abroad/returning to home country) will necessitate contact and advice from the PEI.
- 3.21 The school will encourage good attendance by:
- 3.22 Informing parents of their child's attendance at parents' evenings. Class lists will be generated and given to teachers.
- 3.23 Children are allowed to wear non-uniform on their birthday if it falls during the school week to encourage children to be at school on their birthday.
- 3.24 Class prizes and certificates will be given in celebration assemblies to the two classes with the best attendance. Punctuality certificates will also be given to classes with no 'lates' recorded that week.
- 3.25 Yearly prizes will be given to children who have 100% attendance. No discretion may be used: any absence, authorised or unauthorised, will mean the prize is not awarded that year.
- 3.26 An attendance chart is displayed on the server so that children can monitor their own class's daily 100% attendance. Prizes are awarded to the class as they achieve a 100% daily attendance. These are awarded in increments of five up to the top total of thirty five in a term.
- 3.27 The school tracks pupils who are showing low attendance and monitors the upwards or down wards trends on a weekly basis. When a pupil reaches above 95% attendance, they are removed from this monitoring.
- 3.28 All teachers will send a half termly report to parents regarding the children's attendance.

4. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

- 4.1 A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance drops below 90%. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.
- 4.2 We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents are informed.
- 4.3 PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our attendance monitoring system alongside receiving pastoral support where necessary.
- 4.4 The individual child may then work with the Pastoral Worker on a one-to-one basis where specific strategies are targeted to support the attendance of the child. This may involve working with the parents as well as the child to improve the attendance.
- 4.5 All PA cases are automatically made known to the PEI team.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Policy writer: Mrs R Wilkinson, who will monitor and evaluate the policy.