

Meersbrook Bank



Community Primary
School

Meersbrook Bank Primary School

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Head: Mrs R. Edwards

Deputy: Mrs C. Shaw

Chair of Govs: Ms K. Johnson

Attendance Policy

Compiled by	Rachel Edwards	Jan 2019
Agreed by	Governors	Feb 2019
Approved by	Governors	Feb 2019
To be reviewed	Every 3 years or when legislation changes	Feb 2022
Reviewed by	Teaching & Learning Committee Governors	Feb 2019

Rationale

Meersbrook Bank Primary School is committed to promoting good attendance to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve their full potential both academically and socially.

Regular attendance and good punctuality are vital to the educational achievement and personal development of the child. Only pupils who attend regularly can fully benefit from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them within the aims and vision of Meersbrook Bank Primary School.

Aims

- To encourage all pupils to achieve their maximum potential
- To raise awareness of the importance of attendance and its impact on progress and attainment
- To recognise and praise pupils who achieve more than 96% attendance during the school year
- To give additional recognition to pupils who achieve 100% attendance
- To encourage parents/carers to play a vital role in supporting the school and encouraging their child to reach good attendance levels
- To monitor and track pupils' attendance and punctuality through effective systems
- To utilise this information to support the school and parents to improve attendance
- To address poor attendance through clear, consistent and effective procedures

The Legal Position (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996)

- Parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age, who are registered at a school, attend regularly.
- The Sheffield Children and Young People & Families (CYPF) must provide a school place to parents who wish their child to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

EXPECTATIONS

What parents/carers and pupils can expect of the school:

- ✓ A broad, balanced education that is dependent upon regular attendance at school
- ✓ The encouragement and promotion of good attendance through assemblies and certificates
- ✓ Weekly certificates are presented to each class with the highest attendance
- ✓ Certificates are presented to each child achieving 100% each term
- ✓ Regular monitoring and accurate recording of attendance
- ✓ Prompt action to be taken where problems are identified
- ✓ Close liaison with external agencies where appropriate to assist and support pupils and their families
- ✓ Regular communication with parents/carers.
- ✓ The school works within the framework of the Sheffield City Council "School Guidance for the management of Attendance".

What the school expects of our pupils:

- ✓ To attend regularly and on time, ready to learn
- ✓ To be prepared for the day with any appropriate equipment e.g. PE kit, school uniform and appropriate clothing for visits etc
- ✓ To report to the school office, should they arrive after the official registration time
- ✓ To work towards a target of at least 96% attendance

What the school expects of parents/carers:

- ✓ It is vitally important that parents are actively involved in promoting good attendance and fulfil their legal parental responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly
- ✓ Parents are encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues that are or could be impacting on their child's attendance
- ✓ To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the day
- ✓ To make routine appointments out of school hours and, in the case of unavoidable emergency appointments, to obtain an authorised absence pass from the school office for any appointments during school time. It is the parent's responsibility to provide evidence of the appointment in order for the absence to be authorised (the appointment letter or card should be shown to the office to be photocopied for school records)
- ✓ To take holidays in school holiday time. Term time holidays will be classed as unauthorised holidays (marked as code G in the register). In line with the Sheffield City Council policy for "Exceptional Leave During Term Time", if parents choose to take their child on holiday in term time, they may be issued with a fixed penalty notice (a fine)
- ✓ To understand that Head teachers no longer have the option to authorise term time holidays unless exceptional circumstance can be applied
- ✓ To understand that exceptional circumstance refer to 'one-off' situations that are unique to the normal reasons for needing to take a holiday during term time

Term Time Leave

We do not encourage holidays to be taken during term time. All requests for term time leave must be made to the Head Teacher on the Term Time Leave Request Form, available from the school office. A return date must be provided and a prompt return is essential.

Only in exceptional circumstances will leave be authorised.

Unauthorised leave of 5 or more days may result in a penalty notice being requested.

If queries are raised about holidays, parents may be asked to provide evidence of the days taken e.g. flight tickets or accommodation receipts.

If the school has reason to believe a term time leave has been taken without request, it is the parent's responsibility to prove otherwise. (Doctor's appointment card, proof of medication etc.)

Fines are currently £60 per parent.

The school will monitor and record attendance using the following registration system:

Children should arrive at school by 8:50a.m.

Registers are taken in class by 9a.m. Class teachers will enter a present mark. (/) Any child who is not present when the register is taken by the class teacher will be marked as being absent (N) until a reason is provided for their late arrival, or school have been notified of the reason for the absence.

Any child arriving after 8.50am must report to the office, providing a reason for their late arrival. They will be marked as being late (L). After 9.30am, any child arriving late will be marked as 'late after registers close' (U), unless proof of a medical appointment is presented to the school office.

Afternoon registration is at 1.00pm.

Electronic Registers are used by all classes, with fire registers being kept for each class.

The school will respond to lateness in the following ways:

Persistent lateness is discussed with parents at parent / teacher consultation meetings, prior to a referral being made to external agencies where appropriate to assist and support pupils and their families in arriving at school on time.

Dealing with absence

Parents are asked to contact the school on the first day of their child's absence by telephone. As a safeguarding precaution, telephone contact is made with parents of any pupils who are absent where school has not been provided with a reason for absence. This is made on the morning of the absence. Absence will only be authorised when a reason has been provided by the parent or carer.

In cases where parents have been asked to provide medical evidence for absence, this should be taken to the office in order for the absence to be authorised. (See 'The school's response to poor attendance', below)

Home contact will be made by the school if several days absences remain unauthorised or the school has any concerns. If this is unsuccessful then the case may be referred to the Local Authority, where 'Child Missing from Education' procedures may commence. (See 'The school's response to poor attendance', below).

The school's response to poor attendance

Attendance concerns are discussed at parent consultation events.

Where there is a concern over a child's absence, initial communication is made with the parents and appropriate support is offered.

Attendance is monitored for any child below 96%. Where attendance is seen as a concern e.g. if the trend is not improving, support from MAST (Multi Agency Support Team) may be requested.

Parents will be informed if attendance drops below 96%. This may be via a conversation with the Head teacher or by a letter.

Where persistent non-attendance continues to be an issue, parents will be asked to provide evidence of attendance at all medical appointments.

Where there is no improvement in attendance, a request will be made for a fixed penalty notice to be issued by the Local Authority.

In cases where a child's non-attendance constitutes a safeguarding concern, this will be reported to Social Care professionals.

Any case of non-attendance will be referred to external agencies for additional support. Each case will be dealt with depending on needs and circumstances.

Roles & Responsibilities

Governors

- ❖ Maintain an overview of attendance through reports by the Head teacher and the Local Authority via the Head teacher's report
- ❖ Have a named governor with responsibility for attendance

Head Teacher

- ❖ Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school
- ❖ Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- ❖ Liaises with the named Governor and LA
- ❖ Works with colleagues to implement targets, review statistics and amend the policy as necessary
- ❖ Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the Family of Schools
- ❖ Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of children Looked After by the Local Authority
- ❖ Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education.
- ❖ The School has been given authorisation from the Child Missing in Education (CME) Team to remove a child from role when the child has been continuously absent for a period of not less than 20 school days, absence has been unauthorised and both the school and local authority have been unable, after reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the child is.

Class Teacher

- ❖ Accurately mark registers using appropriate codes, in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- ❖ Ensure Office staff receive notes from parents promptly
- ❖ Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a pupil
- ❖ Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school

Office Administration Staff

- ❖ Receive, update and maintain accurate class registers in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- ❖ Maintain SIMS attendance database
- ❖ Provide reports from SIMS to the Head teacher, governors and other school staff. Local Authority officers as requested
- ❖ Provide relevant information to Local Authority officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality
- ❖ Have responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education.
- ❖ Have responsibility for ensuring parents/carers have access to accurate information and appropriate forms
- ❖ Have responsibility for ensuring requests for term time leave are dealt with in a timely and effective manner in line with the school policy on attendance

Multi Agency Support Team – Attendance

- ❖ Liaise with staff in school and other offices of the Local Authority to promote good attendance and punctuality within the school, Family of Schools and wider community
- ❖ Support the school to develop whole school strategies relating to attendance and inclusion. Offering advice, analysis and monitoring of attendance issues
- ❖ Work with school staff regarding the pupil concerns list, discuss and agree appropriate courses of action when necessary, including prosecution procedures as appropriate

Additional information can be found at:

Meersbrook Bank's school website
Sheffield City Council; www.sheffield.gov.uk/attend
The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/regulation/8/made>
Education Act 1996
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

This policy will be reviewed annual. Next review – September 2016

Approved by Governors on:

Approved by (add committee etc):