FORSBROOK C.E. (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy: Attendance
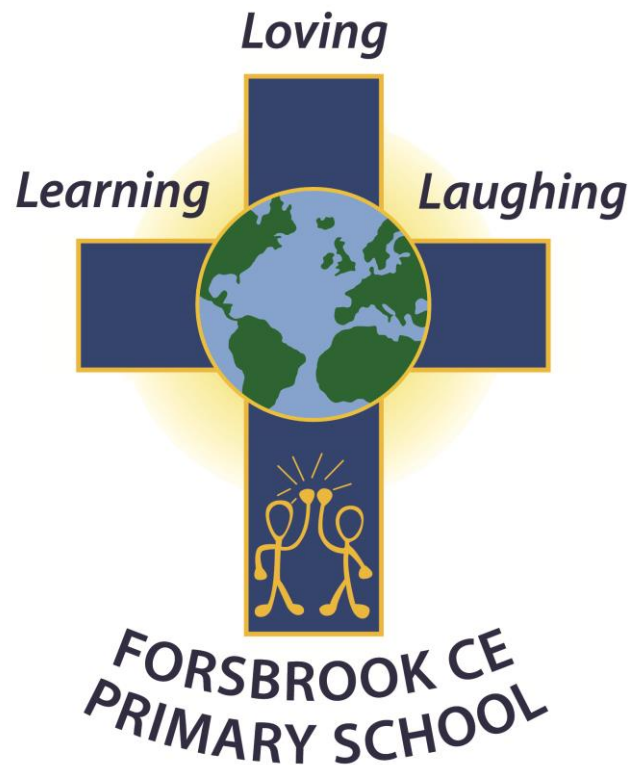
Adopted:	**Spring Term 2017**
Co-ordinator:	**Head Teacher**
Next Review Date:	**Spring Term 2019**

Attendance Policy

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

We feel at Forsbrook Primary School we have a central role to play in every child's social, spiritual and moral development. We ensure this by promoting Christian values of honesty,
respect, faith, community, determination and trust as identified by the children, staff and governors. These values underpin this policy and its related practices.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure all pupils take full advantage of opportunities for learning in school
- To ensure the well-being and safety of children at Forsbrook Primary School
- To set school targets for attendance
- To monitor pupil absence and the reasons

Intentions

- To actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all pupils
- Each week the classes with 100% attendance will receive a class certificate. The class with the most certificates in the school year will receive a trip fully funded by the school (e.g. Waterworld)
- To celebrate and mention on the school newsletter at the end of every term 100% attendance in individual pupils
- To monitor regular or extended absence and take steps to resolve this
- To work with the Educational Welfare Officer to ensure no child is absent without school being aware of the reason
- To ensure that discretionary power to grant leave is only used in exceptional circumstances
- To use the School Information Management System to analyse and monitor pupils' patterns of absence and work with parents to rectify patterns

Teaching and Learning Impact
Forsbrook Primary School will endeavour to reduce the disruption to children's learning through unnecessary absence and will work with families towards avoiding lateness or avoidable time off from school.

Equality and Inclusion
All children will be dealt with in the same manner. Allowances within this policy will be made for children with severe disabilities or illnesses who require additional time off for administration or medication.

Safeguarding
If a child is absent for any reason unknown to the school, Parents or Carers must contact the school office in some way before 9.30 am on the first day of absence. A text message will be sent or a phone call made to the Parents/Carers of any child who is not in school and school has not received a message about the child absence.

Registration of pupils
- Forsbrook Primary School will ensure that staff are aware of any new legislation with pupil registration
- Registers are to be completed accurately at the beginning of every session i.e. morning and afternoon
- Parents to be aware of importance of contacting school to report absence before 9.30am
- Senior Leadership Team and School Governors to ensure evaluation of attendance procedures
- Regular attendance reports will be provided for the Governing Body of Forsbrook Primary School
- All absences will be reported by the Office Services Manager to the Educational Welfare Officer on their half termly visit.

Contents of the Attendance Register
Each class teacher will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. On each occasion they will record whether every pupil is present or absent.

The school will follow up any absences to:
1. Ascertain the reason;
2. Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
3. Identify whether the absence is authorised or not; and,

4. Identify the correct code to use before entering it onto the school's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

Registration and Absence Procedures

All absences will be recorded on school registers using the national codes . Any pupil who is on roll but not present in school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised Absence – This is for pupils where no reason has been given or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.
2. Authorised Absence – This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.
3. Approved Educational Activity – This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken offsite but with the approval of the school.

Children should be in school for 8:55am. Children who arrive after 8:55am must enter school via the main school entrance. Registers close at 9:00am. Children arriving in school between these times will be recorded as late.

A record of late minutes is kept for individual children and the same procedure for absence is followed if the minutes late raises concern.

Children who arrive after registers have closed will be marked:

Either

1. With the appropriate code if an acceptable explanation is given.

Or

2. With a U code, which is an unauthorised absence, if an explanation is not deemed acceptable.

Reporting Absences

It is a parent's responsibility to inform school of any reasons for a child's absence, before 9.30 am, each day that they are absent from school (unless otherwise arranged with school) and to provide further information as required. We will refer the matter to the school's EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) if no response is forthcoming.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Head teachers are now only allowed to authorise any leave of absence when an application has been made in advance and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. The annual family holiday would not be deemed as an exceptional circumstance.

What should parents do if they wish to request a leave of absence?

Parents should collect a 'Request for Leave During Term Time' form which includes guidance notes from school and return to the Headteacher. We would strongly recommend that this is done before planning any leave of absence. A letter will be sent from school on the outcome of your request.

What happens if a child goes on holiday in term time or takes leave of absence for other reasons without permission from the school?

The absences will be marked in the school register as unauthorised absences and this may result in a Penalty Notice of £60 (rising to £120) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority. In some cases, parents may be prosecuted for the offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year.
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

Penalty Notice for leave of absence (holiday) in term time

- Previously our approach was to only issue a Penalty Notice if the pupil's overall attendance was below 87%. This threshold has now been removed.
- Previously only one Penalty Notice per pupil was issued within an academic year. This limit has been removed so more than one Penalty Notice could be issued for repeated absence without permission during term time.

- Previously pupils missing 10 sessions or five days taken together risked a Penalty Notice. Now a combined total of ten sessions (not necessarily grouped as 5 consecutive days) could trigger a Penalty Notice.
- Instead of monitoring and totalling holiday absences taken across each academic year, they will now be monitored across the previous three terms, regardless of academic year

Penalty Notice for persistent absence
- Parents whose child is repeatedly absent will now only receive one warning notice period to bring about improvement in attendance in a single academic year. If attendance deteriorates again then no further formal warning notice will be issued and the Local Authority can automatically consider other statutory actions if unauthorised absence re-occurs.

Medical Appointments
Parents of children attending a medical appointment during the school day need to produce an appointment card/letter or similar paperwork prior to the appointment. Where possible all medical/dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. We can then confirm lateness as a 'medical' absence and therefore authorised.

School Action on Repeated Absence
Where a child is persistently late or absent, even if the Head Teacher has been informed, the following steps will be taken:
- A telephone call/letter/meeting informing parents of the number of late arrrivals.
- If lateness persists then the parents will be contacted by the Educational Welfare Officer
- Please note that any lateness or unexplained absence will be monitored by the EWO as a matter of course.
- Schools and EWOs must now adhere to the 'Code of Conduct under the Provision of the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2007 and Subsection (1) Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003'.

Roles and Responsibilities
Attendance is overseen by the Office Services Manager, who maintains a record of children's attendance rates and reasons for absence. Children causing concerns are identified and appropriate procedures, as outlined in the policy are followed.
Forsbrook Primary School works closely with the EWO to discuss individual cases and decides on appropriate next steps, looks at whole-school improvements or concerns relating to attendance statistics.

Summary
The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Guidance & Legislation

DfE Advice on School Attendance

SCC Education Welfare Guidance on Attendancee