



## Northchapel Community Primary School Attendance Policy

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>January 2025</b>
<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>D Coggin</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>T &amp; L Committee</b>
<b>Due for next review</b>	<b>January 2026</b>

### Rationale

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils. The School's ethos demonstrates that children feel that their presence in school is important, that they are missed when they are absent or late. The School will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the policy.

The government have updated their strategy to improve overall attendance in school from 2024, 'Working together to improve attendance – 2024.' Our Policy works alongside the updated strategy to improve the wellbeing and outcomes of all of our children, including vulnerable, SEND and any other child unable to attend school regularly due to ongoing illness.

### Aims

- To maximise attendance of all children.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty, including SEND or illness.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Pupil Entitlement team and multi-agency teams.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Parents**
- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).

- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.

- **Governors**

To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

- **Headteacher (Attendance Ambassador)**

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and / or punctuality is an issue.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To write to parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those who experience attendance difficulties.

- **Class Teacher**

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate recording sheet.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by Office Staff.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

- **Office Staff**

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the Bromcom MIS.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports each term.
- To contact parents/carers by 9am on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason if the parent has not contacted the school.

- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Headteacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- To report the cohort and whole school attendance in the weekly newsletter to share with all stakeholders of the school.

## **West Sussex County Council**

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

- The School uses Attendance Manager provided by Bromcom to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance. This system consists of specialised software and OMR sheets.
- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are checked digitally by the School Office after the closure of the registration period.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

## **ABSENCE**

### **Lateness**

- Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 8.50am. will be considered as late.
- Pupils arriving after 8.50am. must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded.
- Pupils arriving after 9.30am. will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be considered an un-authorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment.
- Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality.

- Three late arrivals in a term is considered to be persistent lateness and parents will receive a letter home.

## **Illness**

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence.
- Where Office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence the Headteacher or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed.
- Persistent absence will be reported to the West Sussex Integrated Front Door, social workers or SENAT where appropriate to the individual to aid families in their child's attendance.

## **Medical and Dental Appointments**

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment must be supported by written evidence/confirmation of such appointments. Parents/carers are requested to provide this confirmation directly to the school office before the day of the appointment, otherwise the absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to try to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

## **Holidays during Term Time**

Parents are no longer entitled to take family holidays during term time. Children have 170 days per year to take holidays.

Authorisation for absence in term time will only be given in exceptional circumstances and any parents wishing to take their child out of school during term time must complete an Absence Request form available at the School Office.

Exceptional circumstances will be determined by the head teacher and governing body. Any absence longer than 2 weeks will be presented for governing body approval.

The following requests for leave of absence will automatically be unauthorised:-

- Holidays in term time (unless circumstances are exceptional – this will be rare)

- Leave of absence requested at the start of an academic year – being absent for the first two weeks of an academic year can be detrimental to your child settling into their new class, meeting their teacher and making relationships.
- Leave of absence leading up to Y6 SATs – this is a time where children are consolidating their learning in preparation for the end of key stage national tests.
- Parents of children aged 4 who have started their primary education with the school before the statutory age of 5 will be required to follow all attendance policies as stated by the Department for Education.

If the request for absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken any way, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In the case of persistent unauthorised absence, it will be referred to the Local Authority who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

## **Fine**

West Sussex County Council can give each parent a fine of £80, which rises to £160 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.

## **Prosecution**

You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives you a Parenting Order.

## **REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS**

All absences both authorised, unauthorised absence and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the daily via the My Child as School app. Letters will also be sent home end of each term in a traffic highlighted report format.