

# *SHERINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL*

## *ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY*

### *Aims*

*At Sherington, we believe that children must attend school regularly if they are to enjoy and achieve to their full potential. Continuity and progression in learning can only be achieved when children attend regularly and punctually.*

*The school will strive to provide a caring, welcoming environment where every member of the school community feels safe and secure.*

### *Objectives*

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school; children, parents, staff and governors.*
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing data on attendance.*

- To develop effective partnerships with the Attendance Advisory Service.
- To establish a system of incentives which acknowledge good attendance and punctuality and challenges any parents and children who do not give a high priority to good attendance and punctuality.
- To continue to meet challenging targets for attendance set by the local authority.
- To follow the guidelines of Attendance Advisory Service with regard to the implementation of the Fast Track System.

### *Procedures*

- To achieve our aims, the following systems and procedures are in place:
- In the Home School Agreement, parents and carers agree to send their child to school regularly and to inform the school with a note or telephone call if their child is absent.

- Registers are taken at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Nursery registration times: 9.00am and 12.30pm

Reception: 8.55am and 12.40pm

- Year 1: 8.55am and 12.55pm

- Year 2: 8.55am and 1.10pm

Key Stage 2: 8.55am and 1.20pm

- All classes use SIMS (electronic system) for maintaining registers. Common symbols are used to record absence; these are found at the bottom page on the electronic register.

- Pupils who arrive late (after 9.00am, i.e., 5 minutes after registration) are marked late by the School's Administrative Officer. Pupils who arrive 30 minutes after registration closes, are marked with a U, which statistically counts as an absence.

- An office assistant will telephone parents on the first day of absence if no phone call has been received. If we are unable to

contact parents/carers by phone, a letter will be sent requesting a written reason for absence.

- The school will check registers on a weekly basis for any absences with no reason given, and again a letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting a reason for absence.
- A note is kept of any conversations with parents/carers and is passed on to the Inclusion Officer/ Deputy who monitor absence throughout the school.
- Every two weeks, the Inclusion Officer/Deputy meets with the Attendance Advisory Officer to monitor the progress of fast track pupils and to discuss any issues relating to attendance or lateness.
- In the school's newsletters, the Headteacher regularly reminds parents and carers about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Parents and carers are also strongly encouraged to organise family holidays during school holidays, not term time. The school will not authorise holiday absence.

- Annual attendance targets are set in the autumn term with the school's STP.
- The targets are shared with Governors in the autumn term Headteacher's report. The Headteacher comments on attendance and punctuality at all full Governors meetings.
- In a weekly celebration assembly, a class is rewarded with an attendance cup for the best attendance in the previous week.
- Each term, all children with 100% attendance receive their own Sherington teddy bear in a special attendance assembly. At the end of the school year, children who have 100% attendance for all three terms also receive a special book.
- Parents and carers are asked to write to the Headteacher if they wish their child to be absent for a particular reason.

*Fast track scheme*

To prevent a child from becoming persistently absent (which is an absent figure of 15%) we follow the fast track scheme, which is a Government initiative to improve whole school attendance. Children are entitled to education under the terms of the Education Act and the Children Act 1989 and 1996. In addition, there is a proven statistical link between good attendance and high achievement.

Greenwich Council has targeted both authorised and unauthorised absence. The procedure which Greenwich Council uses (and which we adhere to) is as follows:

- Letter 1 The school sends a whole school letter stating the fast track start date and the number of absences which would meet the criteria. This is both authorised and unauthorised absence to start with.
- Letter 2 Notifies parents whose children have met the criteria at any time.

- Letter 3a Is sent if there is an absence after the child has been notified as a fast track pupil, and the parent has called the school, but has not provided medical evidence for this absence.
- Letter 3b Is sent to parents who have not contacted the school and have not provided any medical evidence.
- The school will monitor fast track pupils.
- The school and the AAO will meet the parents in school. The AAO will complete a check-list, the issue will be discussed, parenting contracts will be signed, and the parents will be informed about further monitoring and possible consequences. Following the meeting, the AAO will send a letter to the parents either acknowledging their attendance at the meeting and attaching a copy of the parenting contract or, if they failed to attend, informing them that the school will continue to monitor the child's attendance.

- Further unauthorised absence will lead to a formal referral to the Attendance Advisory Service, who will in turn follow their own protocol. This can include a penalty notice or pre-court conference which may lead to a referral to the Magistrates Court.
- At the school and AAO meeting, they will decide which pupils will have a school attendance panel meeting. The AAO will send out the invites.
- The school attendance panel meeting will be held. Following the meeting, the AAO will send out decisions. The AAO to prepare relevant court papers.
- The Court and school attendance panel to review. AAO to prepare relevant court papers.
- If there is no further absence for six weeks the child will be removed from this phase of fast track.

*Equal opportunities*

*Sherington is committed to maintain equal opportunity in all aspects of school life. It is recognised that sometimes persistent lateness or poor attendance may related to Child Protection.*

### *Child protection*

*Sherington is committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children. Lateness and poor attendance may sometimes be associated with concerns about the welfare of a child. Teachers and support staff are aware that certain issues need to be handled with sensitivity and that any concerns about an individual child must be reported to the Headteacher or designated child protection person.*

*September 2014*