



The Griffin Federation

Learning Together for Excellence

Gedney Drove End, Holbeach St Marks & Sutton Bridge Westmere Primary Schools

~ Executive Headteacher - Miss Karyn Wiles ~

School Attendance Policy **September 2016**

Introduction

All three schools are caring schools, enabling children to reach their full potential. They are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The schools believe sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education they provide and therefore promote regular school attendance. Regular school attendance is crucial when ensuring that pupils achieve their potential. To this end the Schools will do as much as they can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that may impede full attendance are acted upon as quickly as possible.

Aims

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
Many parents and their pupils will need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations may exist beyond the control of pupil's and/ parents, which the school needs to address in partnership with external agencies.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer groups and prepare themselves fully to take their place in



society as well rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

Expectations

We expect the following from all our pupils:

- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may hinder them from attending school.

We expect the following from parents:

- To encourage your children to attend school.
- To ensure that you contact school as soon as possible as is reasonably practical whenever your child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that your children arrive at school well prepared for the day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to school. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the pupil or their parent).
- Take steps through rewards to encourage good attendance.
- A quality education.

Encouraging Attendance Through Rewards:

We encourage attendance in all or some of the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session and within 10 minutes of the start of session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate times.

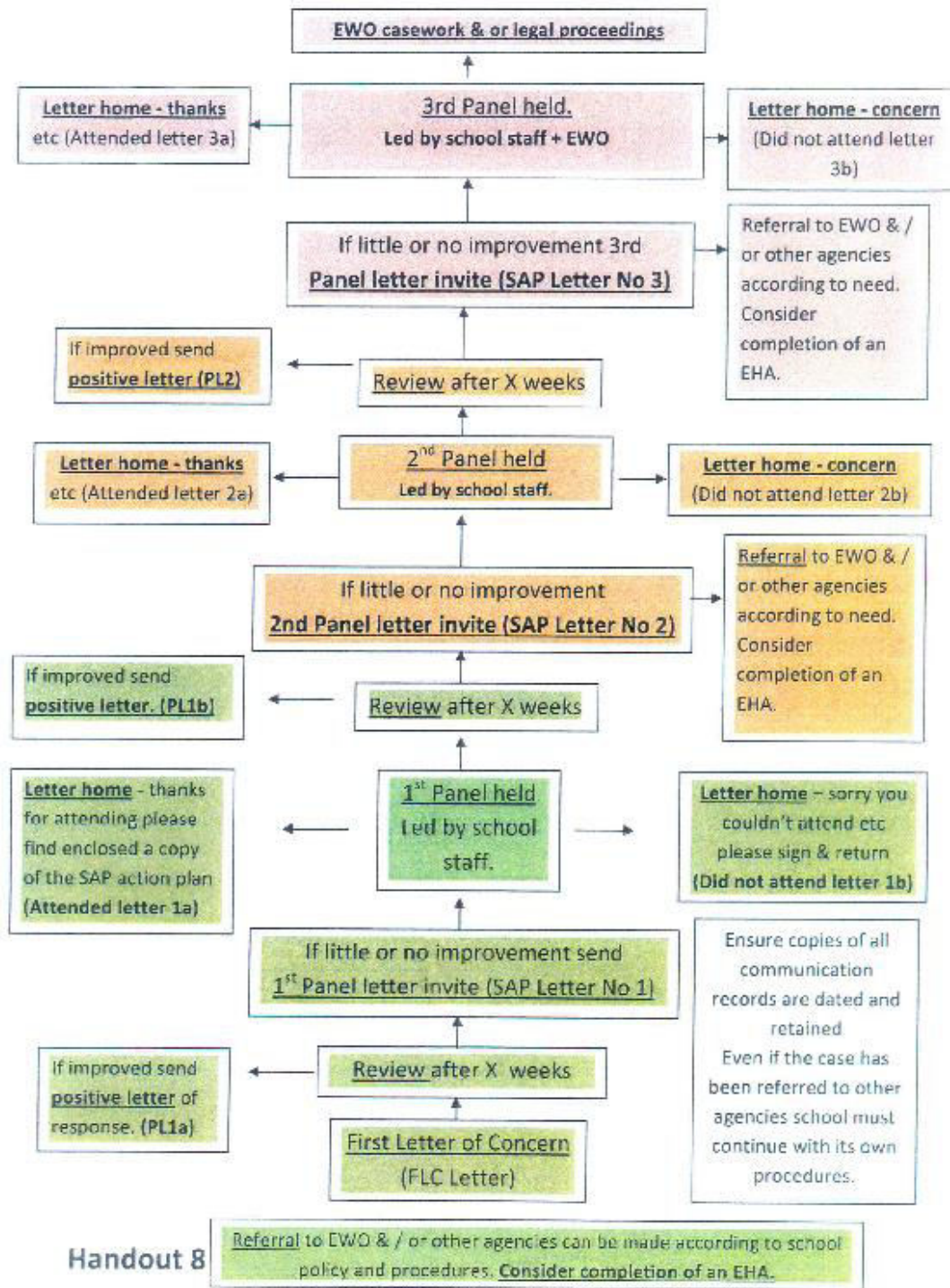
- A certificate for 100% class attendance as achieved weekly.
- A certificate for 100% attendance for individuals yearly.
- All awards to be presented by the Headteacher/Governors/Guests as appropriate.
- A child attending school every day will receive a currency reward that they can spend in the shop weekly.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3. This will include the sharing of relevant information with the destination school.
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.

Responding to non-attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond as follows:

- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone.
- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents on the second day school will carry out home visits to establish the safety of the child.
- Where there is no response, a letter will be sent after three days of unexplained non-attendance. The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) may be contacted if deemed appropriate or there are causes for concern. If deemed necessary the PCSO or CSC will be also contacted.
- Where necessary and in line with close monitoring of attendance the School Attendance Panel Procedures will be implemented by the Executive Headteacher. These procedures follow the structure below.

School Attendance Panel Procedures



Reintegration

- The return to school for a pupil after a long term absence may require special planning. E.g. it may be appropriate to establish a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP) as detailed in the DfES Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Guidance (10/99).
- The class teacher with guidance from the SENCO will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Support from the SENCO may be required.

The success of the PSP will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the pupil and parents. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

Staff will be notified of the return of a pupil who has been on long-term absence via designated staff meeting time and/or the weekly staff notice board in the Staff Room.

Responsibilities

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff will make attendance a high priority, and will convey to pupils the importance and value of education.

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Oversee the whole policy.
- Report to governors on attendance figures.
- Oversee the work of administrative staff.
- To look into suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
- Produce attendance profile for the whole school.

- Liaise with EWO.

Class Teacher:

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- Inform Admin to follow-up immediately any unexplained non-attendance by contacting parents.
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.
- To speak with the Headteacher over any attendance concerns.

Parents:

- Contact with school on first day of absence or as soon as possible.
- Absence notes if longer than initially indicated.
- Support for general attendance.

Education Welfare Service:

- Liaise with Headteacher.
- Home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- Group work with identified pupils.
- Undertake Legal proceedings on behalf of the LEA where appropriate.
- Accept referrals, initiate contact with parents of carers and undertake assessments.
- Plan and review casework.
- Provide feedback for schools.
- Strategic/policy advice and support in relation to matters of attendance, the employment of young people involved in performing.
- Support the school in the establishment and management of a school attendance panel if required.
- Support the school in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

Admin

- Collate and enter data base attendance figures.
- Contact parents/legal guardian for information re unexplained absences, and report findings to the Headteacher.
- Advise Class Teachers of details of phone calls re absenteeism.

Governors

- Request regular attendance updates via the Headteachers Report to Governors at full meetings of the Board.
- Representation of the school on the required committees when attendance issues arise.

Liaising with external agencies

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

Poor school attendance may be symptom of a wide range of institutional, community, family or individual circumstances. Many of these circumstances will demand expert support beyond the remit of the school or the EWS. It is therefore vital that strong partnerships are established with all agencies that work with children and young people. The EWS may be able to help the school establish multi-agency meetings or may be able to advise on how schools can become involved in existing local arrangements.

Other Agencies to be used as required: -

- Educational Behavioural and Support Services (EBSS)
- Educational Psychologist
- Special Educational Needs Service
- Social Services
- Youth Service
- Local Police.
- Family Support Workers
- School nurse

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. The school will have full regard for the requirements of the Act. The school has a Data Protection Notification, which details the circumstances under which the data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents the school sharing information with the police or social services where they believe that a pupil under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

Appendix 1

GUIDANCE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

Good Practice

Under Section 7 of the Education act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities...

The Importance of Registration:

- A manual class attendance register, will be kept on which, at the **BEGINNING** of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. Registers will be collected from and returned to the school office, within 10 minutes of the start of session.
- Manual registers must be kept in ink and corrections must be made in such a way that the original entry and correction are both clearly distinguishable.
- Authorised absences should be entered in red initially with the symbol for categorising the absence in blue or black.
- Attendance Registers, must be kept for a minimum of 3 years from the date that the last entry was made.
- **Only the school**, in the context of the law **can approve absence**, not parents. If a class teacher does not except the explanation offered for absence, as a valid reason then the matter must be referred to the Headteacher.
- Emerging patterns of authorised absence will be reported to the Administrator, who then discusses with the Headteacher.
- Reasons for absence should be entered in the register by the appropriate code.
 - / Present am - please mark in black
 - \ Present pm - please mark in black

The following codes to be marked in black inside a **RED CIRCLE**

- N No reason yet provided for Absence (please mark this code in pencil or leave red circle blank)
- B Education Off-site - e.g. pupils at other school at the time registration would normally take place
- C Other Authorised Circumstances
- E Excluded

- F Extended Family Holiday Agreed
- G Family Holiday Not Agreed or days in Excess of Agreement
- H Family Holiday Agreed
- I Illness
- M Medical – Doctor’s, Dentist, Optician or Hospital Appointment
- O Unauthorised Absence
- T Travellers Absence
- V Educational Visit or Trip E.g. Freiston
- X Non-Compulsory School Age Absence
- L Late before Register closes
- U Late after Register closes
 - Class teachers, who experience difficulty in receiving a parental note, will inform the Administrator.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence:

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

All other absences must be regarded as **unauthorised**.

The following are acceptable reasons for authorising absences.

- Illness.
- Family bereavements – (time limited).
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available.
- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion until removed from school or reinstated.
- **Family Holidays:** Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday during school term though schools are able to exercise the discretion to grant parental requests. However, each request should be considered individually taking into account the age of the child, previous attendance patterns, parental views and the educational progress of the child. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence will not be authorised. If a request is granted the absence should not normally be for more than two weeks in any school year. If the holiday goes on for longer

than agreed, the extra days absence will be unauthorised.

The following are classed as present for statistical information and must be code marked.

- Field trips and educational visits both in this country and overseas.
- Pupils receiving approved education off site e.g. those receiving specialist support or those in receipt of home tuition but remaining on the roll of the school.

Absences will not be authorised under the following circumstances.

- Shopping trips
- Holiday trips in term time where permission of the school has not been given
- Minding the house or looking after siblings
- Lateness if registration is missed without explanation.
- Medical appointments that cannot be verified.
- No reason given.
- School staff feels the note is not genuine or valid.

Unusual circumstances may arise that lead to a young person being absent from school. It is for the Headteacher to decide whether the explanation offered is reasonable. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents should be considered. Further advice is available in DfES Circular No. 10/99.

Lateness:

- Schools should actively discourage late arrival by challenging parents of children who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.
- Where a pupil arrives after register closure without good reason, they should be marked with an unauthorised absence in red and the letter L in blue or black to indicate that they are on site.

Removal from the school roll

See Circulars 10/99 and 111/99 and the Schools Administration Handbook (Section A2) for further guidance. **Removal from the school roll under**

circumstances other than detailed below is illegal: -

- Where the school has been notified that a pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.

- Where a pupil has ceased to attend school and the parent(s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- Where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer (SMO) that a pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend school.
- Where a pupil has been absent without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Headteacher has failed, after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the EWS to obtain information on the cause of the absence.
- Where the Headteacher has been notified that a pupil has died.
- A pupil has ceased to attend school and no longer lives at a place, which is a reasonable distance from the school.
- If a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time.
- Where a pupil has been permanently excluded and the Pupil Discipline Committee has confirmed this decision.

Ensuring pupil information is regularly updated

It is the responsibility of the School administrator to ensure that the school's electronic information is kept as up to date as possible. This will help to ensure that contact with families is productive and that referrals to other agencies can be actioned effectively. - Principle 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998 states 'Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date'.

Pupils who are missing

Where it is believed that a pupil has left the area and enquiries have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil, the Common Transfer file (CTF) should be completed and uploaded to the DfES National Missing Pupils Database.