

# **Meadowbrook College Attendance Policy Jan 2015**

## **Aims**

To provide clear guidelines about how the College promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance. This will ensure that all stakeholders understand the College's expectations of themselves, and each other, and strive to attain them.

## **Objectives**

1. to achieve a 90% + attendance rate
2. to restrict days taken as holiday, during term time in any one year.
3. to promote partnership between parents and the College, working for the benefit of the student's learning
4. to involve other agencies when all possible the College based supportive measures have been put in place.
5. To ensure safeguarding policy and procedures are met.

The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for the following personnel:

- Students
- Parents
- Staff
- Governors

## **Procedures for implementation**

### **Expectations of students:**

- that they will attend the College regularly, aiming for a minimum attendance rate of 90 % and a goal of 100%
- that they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day
- that they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may hinder them from attending the College.

### **Expectations of parents:**

- That they will ensure their child attends the College, aiming for a 90 – 100% attendance rate
- That they will contact the College as soon as it is reasonably practical (eg by 9.00am) whenever their child is unable to attend
- That any absence is followed by a written explanation of why the child was absent and for what period of time if it is more than one day
- To ensure that their child arrives in the College well prepared for the College day
- To contact the College, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from the College
- To refrain from taking the child out of the College for holidays, or occasional days, unless there are significant exceptional circumstances

### **Expectations of the College:**

- To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence / absence
- To make early contact with parents when a student fails to attend
- To refer to appropriate support agencies as required
- To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance
- To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted
- To closely monitor attendance, and in collaboration with the County Attendance team, react to patterns and trends.

### **Expectations of the Governors:**

- To monitor the effectiveness of the policy through Head teacher reports
- To support the College in encouraging good attendance through role modelling
- To communicate with parents and other agencies as appropriate

### **The College procedures related to attendance:**

#### **Registration**

- Registration periods are 9.15 – 12:30 / 1pm-2pm registers will be completed during these periods and returned to the office.
- Registers will be completed using the codes identified in Appendix A
- If no information, regarding the absence of a student, has been received and the student is not present then a First Day Response phone call will be made to the parent to check the reason for absence. This may be followed up with a text message
- If there is no initial reason given for the absence, or letter of explanation on the student's return, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence

#### **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Headteacher, following statutory requirements and the College's policy on attendance.

#### **Authorised absence**

- Absence will be authorised if the College has notification from the parents that the student is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence and a note of confirmation on the student's return if the absence is longer than one day
- If the student has a medical appointment with the doctor or dentist that cannot be made outside the College hours, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents. Parents should request the period of absence or inform the College in advance.
- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the College procedures then this will be an authorised absence.

An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents give a reason, if the absences are persistent. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the College will request confirmation from the GP that the student has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend the College regularly.

#### **Unauthorised absence**

Absences will not be authorised if the following occur:

- Unexplained absence
- Absence for a shopping trip or looking after a younger child at home
- A trip or holiday that has not been approved by the College in advance
- Any absence that is not considered by the panel to be as the result of extenuating circumstances

### **Persistent lateness**

If a child arrives after the register has closed the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the lateness is persistent and parents/carers fail to work with the College to address the issues, the matter can be referred to the County Attendance Team, who will offer support. If there is still no improvement, a Penalty Fine could be issued.

### **Holiday absence**

Amendments to the registration regulations remove references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If a holiday request is refused by the College, but the child is still taken on holiday, the matter can be referred to the County Attendance Team who can issue a Penalty Warning notice.

### **Response to non attendance:**

- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the College will use the contacts list provided by parents.
- Where there has been no response, or explanation, the College will continue to telephone and make a home visit if appropriate.
- Where there continues to be no response to the College intervention, and the absence has persisted without explanation, the College will refer the issue to the County Attendance Team.
- If there are safeguarding issues the College may report the student as a missing person (MISPER)
- **If a student's attendance slips below 90%, the** College will initially write to parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the Team Leader will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance Team if appropriate.
- If a student is repeatedly late, the College will initially write to parents expressing concerns about late arrival and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the Team Leader will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the County Attendance Team if appropriate.
- In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between the College and parents, with the support of the County Attendance Team, the College will refer the matter formally to the County Attendance Team and, where necessary, legal proceedings will be instigated.

### **Legal proceedings**

The Education Act 1996, Section 444 and the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23, gives powers to the Local Authority to initiate a range of legal procedures if parents/carers fail to ensure an appropriate education for their child. These procedures include a Penalty Fine, an Education Supervision Order, Parenting Order or prosecution which could result in a parent/carer being fined, being required to undertake unpaid work in the community and in extreme cases a term of imprisonment.

**Incentives for good attendance:**

- Attendance data will be checked termly (six times) by the Senior Management Team to identify any issues
- Attendance will be discussed at regular staff meetings where staff have the opportunity to express any concerns
- A certificate for 95% attendance and 100% attendance will be given out at the end of every term, with an additional prize for the whole year at the end of term 6.
- A certificate for improved attendance will be given as appropriate.
- Reasons for regular attendance and arriving on time, well prepared for the College will be raised in circle times and tutorials
- Parents will receive reports on their child's level of attendance in letters every term

**Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness**

- The SLT will analyse attendance data at the end of each of the six terms to identify issues and trends. Individual student data including attendance prior to starting Meadowbrook College to be included. Data to be shared with programmes .
- The College will work closely with the County Attendance Team in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the College
- The College will evaluate the success of the procedures by measuring the annual attendance % against their target at the end of the year, and their progress towards attaining the target in February.

**Summary**

Through the implementation of the policy, the following will be achieved:

- a 90% + attendance rate
- a positive partnership between parents and the College, working for the benefit of the children's learning
- clear and transparent procedures and expectations understood by all stakeholders

**Date of review:                    September 2017**