YAPTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

An Open Door to Learning

Attendance Policy

Rationale

Every child has a right to education and parents are legally responsible for making sure that their child, once enrolled at a school, attends regularly and punctually. Regular attendance at school is the single most important factor in a child making appropriate progress and achieving success. Good regular and punctual attendance means doing well academically, developing better relationships with other children and positive behaviour. It also sets up good habits for when young people enter into work and life.

Principles

We recognise that children's learning is affected by their attendance, as we aim to encourage everyone to aim high and try to achieve their full potential. The school provides a warm, welcoming and caring environment, within which everyone is valued and respected.

All school staff work with parents to help their children attend school punctually every day and to thereby meet the legal requirement that all children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular, full-time basis.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason (e.g. illness or educated off-site).

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable (e.g. absences that have not been properly explained) or children who arrive too late to receive a mark in the register.

The school works in partnership with the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

The Governing Body agrees legally required targets for attendance each year.

Procedures

Attendance registers are taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and sent to the office for checking by 9.10am. The office staff contact the parents/carer of any child who has an unexplained absence before the end of the session. All absences are treated as unauthorised unless or until the school agrees on a satisfactory explanation.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Illness and other legitimate reasons
If a child is unfit for school, parents / carers are asked to inform the school on the first day of absence before 9.30am. When the child returns, he / she should bring a written note if they have not already rung/ e-mailed the school office with a reason. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested, such as a doctor's note or appointment card. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for day trips or longer holidays etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency e.g. bereavement or for medical appointments which take place during school time.

- Register codes
Appropriate codes are entered by the office staff. The Headteacher confirms any disputed codes.

- Late arrival
Children who arrive late to school must report to the school office, and the time of arrival noted on the register. Arrival at the school after 9.25am (30 minutes after the official start of school) is recorded as an unauthorised absence, unless a reasonable explanation is given.

- Holiday absence
The school will not authorise holiday in term time for any pupils in any year group.

- Appointments
Parents have a responsibility for ensuring that non-urgent medical and dental appointments are outside of the school day whenever possible. In exceptional cases, where this is not possible, parents have a responsibility for ensuring that only part and not all of the school day is missed.

- Communication with parents
If concerns about attendance or punctuality arise, the school will contact the parents/carers to discuss these and agree how this will be taken forward. A case file may be started, comprising documented phone calls, letters, meetings, agreed actions and review dates.

Each half term, parents will be sent a colour-coded letter linked to attendance for their child for that half term. These will be as follows:

Red letter – attendance below 90%
Amber letter – attendance 90 – 94.99%
Green letter – attendance above 95%

White letter – if attendance below 90% because of a block of illness eg a week's 'flu.

The school applies the following monitoring procedures:

- **<u>Attendance Club</u>**
The Headteacher runs an attendance club at playtime for the poorest attenders. The focus at this club is to encourage the importance of good attendance.

- **<u>Electronic records</u>**
Attendance of all pupils is recorded electronically using the West Sussex SIMS system. This is up-dated regularly, and used to inform patterns and concerns across the school.

- **<u>Education Welfare Service</u>**
The school works in partnership with the Education Welfare Service, and seeks their advice on issues and matters arising from pupil absence. The initial responsibility to monitor, investigate and improve individual poor attendance lies with the school, and pupil case files will be kept.

If a child has ***10 unauthorised sessions in a 10 week period***, then the school can make a FPN referral (Fixed Penalty Notice).

If a child has ***20 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period*** then the school can make an A6 referral.

A session is either a morning or afternoon period in school (1 weeks absence equates to 10 sessions missed)

- **<u>Governing Body</u>**
The attendance policy is agreed by the CPC Committee who monitor ongoing attendance in school.

- **<u>Pupil Entitlement</u>**
Advice on attendance can be obtained from the Pupil Entitlement Investigation Team (0330 222 8200 open 8.30-1.30)

Children Missing Education (CME)

Schools must liaise with CME when a parent withdraws a child to be home educated, or should they be unable to establish the whereabouts of a child who has been absent for more than 10 days without contact from the parents. CME guidance is stored in the front office and all communications logged.

Policy adopted Autumn 2017
To be reviewed Autumn 2020