



ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Learn to Live Federation (incorporating Bidwell Brook School, Dartington & Ellen Tinkham School, Exeter) is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a federation we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

Our federation will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

STATUTORY DUTY OF SCHOOLS

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Where the request for leave was not agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice (parents must, from 1st September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days). If this penalty is not paid the Local Authority will institute legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

The guidance in The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 will be followed with regard to deleting pupils from the Admission Register. The Education Welfare Service (EWO) will be informed of every student deleted from the Admission Register.

If a pupil is deemed to be missing from education (CME), the guidelines issued by the Education Welfare Service will be followed. This can include a referral to the Education Welfare Officer for investigation.

PRINCIPLES

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly. The national average attendance is 94%. We strive to support students and families to achieve well above average attendance.

We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed. We will consult with all members of the federation and the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the federation attendance policy.

We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.

Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Promoting positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by Seniors Leaders and the federation Governors.

Consistent and vigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place. Parents/Carers are required to provide the school with an explanation in the event of non-attendance. Persistent non-attendance may be viewed as a safeguarding issue as it is a child's right to attend school.

PROCEDURES

- Clear start and finishing times of registration
- Guidance on the accurate completion of registers
- The importance of punctuality and the response to lateness
- Clear guidance on authorised and unauthorised absence
- Respite care is regarded as authorised absence
- Referral routes with roles and responsibilities for pupils with emerging attendance problems
- The process for completion of holiday forms
- Attendance % can also fluctuate through the health of the pupil
- Working practice with other colleagues (Education Welfare Officer, social care.)
- The inclusion of attendance information in federation documentation e.g. the prospectus, reports
- Governors will monitor absences termly via the Head's Report.
- The federation will actively seek to support learning opportunities in cases where children have authorised absences such as hospital stays.
- In the case of an uncollected child at the end of the school day where parents/carers are uncontactable school must refer to the social worker. If they are unavailable contact the duty social worker. (the time frame for this is one hour from the end of the school day).

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole federation community.