



STEWARDS ACADEMY

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ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

PRINCIPLES

In order for children to be able to succeed at school, we have an expectation that they must arrive punctually at school and to lessons and attend school on a regular basis.

Much emphasis will be placed upon the recognition of the significance of full attendance in order to enable children to fulfil their potential. It is vital for pupils to see that all staff - tutors, subject staff, Pastoral Leads, senior staff, the Academy Education Welfare Officer, and the Attendance Officer, encourage and recognise good levels of attendance and give the appropriate support to those pupils who may have some difficulty with their punctuality and attendance. As a school, we seek to work in partnership with our parents in order to provide the necessary level of support and guidance to those pupils, parents and families who may need it.

It is important for all pupils, parents and staff to be clear about what the procedures and systems are for monitoring punctuality and attendance. We must all have high expectations and work towards achieving this in a positive partnership, in order that our pupils get the best possible advantages from their school experience. It is however to be noted pupils that do have poor attendance will not be permitted to attend school trips.

Changes to Essex Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices

The **Essex Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices** has been reviewed by the steering group, and some changes have been made, based on recommendations by schools. These changes will be effective from 1st October 2017 and are:

- A penalty notice may be issued if 10 unauthorised absences have occurred during a 10 week period (instead of the current 6 week period)
- A penalty notice may be issued if there are 6 or more unauthorised sessions due to a holiday taken during the first two weeks of September

GUIDELINES

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PUPILS

1. Attend school punctually and regularly in order to keep up with the requirements of the school curriculum.
2. Be responsible for maintaining their own high level of attendance (at least School target or above – 96%).
3. Bring an absence note to school on return from an absence which is passed straight to the Attendance Office.
4. Pupils arriving after 8.40am without a note from a parent or medical appointment card will be directed to Afternoon Prep for 30 minutes on the same day.
5. If a pupil is late they must collect a late slip from the Attendance Office.
6. Ensure that they make up any work missed while they were absent.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

1. Understand that it is their legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school punctually and on a regular basis unless there is an acceptable reason and see themselves as partners with the school in the education of their children.
2. Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, NOT parents (as laid down in the guidelines of the DFES).
Parents must understand that the only reasons for authorised absence are the following:-
 - genuine illness
 - being prevented from attending school by any unavoidable cause
 - as a result of a religious observance by pupil's parents – must be requested in writing to the Attendance Office prior to event
 - if the school is not within walking distance of the child's home (3 miles) and arrangements have not been made by the local authority for the child's transport to and from school
 - medical and dental appointments (a whole day's absence is not acceptable and parents should aim to arrange such appointments so as to minimise disruption to the school day) – supported by an appointment letter/card
 - family bereavement
 - job interviews
 - to participate in approved public performances
 - exclusion
 - Pupils with attendance which falls below the school target of 96% may not be permitted to attend school trips of a recreational nature.
3. Telephone or email the Attendance Office by 8.45am and leave a message on the first day of a pupil's absence stating the **exact** reason for the absence and contact school for each day of absence thereafter. Failure to contact the school could result in a home visit from a member of staff to ascertain the reason for the absence, this is in order to safeguard the welfare of all pupils.
4. Send an absence note to the Attendance Office when their child returns to school. The note should state a reason for the absence, it does not authorise it.
5. Work closely with the school staff in the instance of truancy from lessons/school, in order to discover the reason(s) why and work to ensure that this does not happen again.
6. Not condone their child's absence from school unless there is a legitimate reason.
7. Provide medical evidence to support absence from school after 3 days of illness when requested.

8. If you have taken your child to the doctor we need evidence to support this regarding your child's illness (this can take the form of a compliment slip stamped by the surgery, a copy of the prescription or bringing the prescribed medication into school to show a member of the Attendance Team).
9. Contact the school if you unsure whether your child should or should not be in school with certain medical conditions.
10. Students can return to school 24 hours after their last bout of sickness and diarrhoea.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Children are not entitled to take holidays during term time.

If exceptional circumstances arise (this is a leave of absence which we at Stewards Academy feel would be of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time) parents/carers must apply by letter to the Attendance Office **before** any booking is made. Leave of absence is considered on a case-by-case basis and a written response from the Attendance Office will be provided. Should any further leave of absence be taken you will be referred to the Missing Education and Child Employment Team at Essex county Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

- Parents have no legal right to leave of absence in term time. If a holiday is not authorised, and is taken without permission, the Missing Education and Child Employment Service may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent of £60 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the timescale the penalty will increase to £120. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, the Missing Education and Child Employment Service will then institute legal proceedings against you in the magistrate's court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.
3. The following absences will be considered "approved educational activity".
 - work experience
 - off-site educational tuition
 - school trips
 - study leave
 4. The following are not classed as reasons to be absent from school and if taken will result in an unauthorised mark and could result in further action being taken.
 - Birthdays
 - Shopping or any other social outing
 - Truancy – missing whole days off school or individual lessons is not acceptable and will have serious disciplinary consequences
 - Looking after a relative or pet
 - Day trips
 - Head lice
 - Meeting relatives
 - Family Weddings/events – unless compassionate
 - Remaining at home to wait for deliveries, repair men etc
 - Any absence immediately before or after a designated school closure will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless medical evidence is provided for the period of absence.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FORM TUTOR

1. Arrive punctually to registration in order to set a good example (by 8.40am).
2. A telephone call should be made by the tutor if there are particular concerns about a pupil's attendance in consultation with the Attendance Office.
3. All absence notes should be read, signed, dated and handed in to the Attendance Office on the day they are received.
4. Liaise with subject staff, Pastoral Lead, Pastoral Support Manager, Academy EWO and Attendance Officer regarding any concerns.
5. Counsel and advise pupils as appropriate.
6. Deal sensitively with pupils who are absent as a result of long term illness or family problems. Keep in contact with such pupils when at home and welcome them back to school warmly to show how much they are valued. Liaise with subject staff on their behalf if necessary.
7. Monitor pupils on attendance report if necessary.
8. Keep the Attendance Office informed of any pupil information relevant to absence.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUBJECT TEACHER

1. Arrive punctually to lessons to set a good example.
2. Take an accurate register electronically at the beginning of each lesson and monitor any absences. If unable to register electronically must request a paper register and return to Attendance Office at the start of the lesson.
3. Recognise regular attendance with praise.
4. Inform the Attendance Office/Tutor of any concerns re: attendance/punctuality.
5. Punish latecomers-to-lessons as per the Behaviour Policy.
6. Ensure that pupils who have been absent due to long term illness or family problems are given adequate support (work sent home etc.) and that such pupils are welcomed back into a supportive classroom environment with extra help given if necessary.
7. Consult with Attendance Officer if any further action needed.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTORAL LEAD IN LIAISON WITH PASTORAL SUPPORT MANAGER

1. Work in conjunction with Attendance Team and Pastoral Support Manager to monitor and take appropriate action with regard to Persistent Absence pupils.
2. Liaise closely with tutors and Pastoral Support Manager regarding any concerns.
3. Meet with Pastoral Support Manager/Deputy Safeguarding Lead regularly to discuss relevant pupils and plan appropriate strategies and action.
4. Meet with pupils and parents as appropriate and keep staff informed of any relevant information.
5. Collect and collate information specifically involving unauthorised absence, inform parents and deal with pupils as appropriate.
6. Place pupils on attendance report if necessary.
7. Recognise good attendance wherever possible.
8. Give appropriate support to pupils who are absent through long term illness or family problems - make phone calls and ensure the child is welcomed back into a supportive environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SENIOR MEMBER OF STAFF (FOR ATTENDANCE)

1. Oversee the implementation of the Whole School Attendance and Punctuality policy.
2. Liaise with Pastoral Support for Attendance and Behaviour, Tutors, Pastoral Leads, Pastoral Support Managers, Academy Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Officer as appropriate.
3. Monitor whole school attendance statistics and work with all staff to ensure minimum 96% attendance.
4. Inform Governors on attendance data as necessary and attend meetings as necessary.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTORAL SUPPORT MANAGER/DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEAD

1. Support the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) in ensuring the attendance of pupils meets the academy targets as set out in the school plan, by monitoring the attendance of all pupils, and ensuring appropriate action takes place to address poor attendance.
2. Organise, manage and lead the Attendance Team (Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer).
3. Chair a weekly meeting with the PSMs to discuss pupils with poor attendance and agree action plans.
4. Monitor whole school attendance statistics and work with all staff to ensure minimum 96% attendance.
5. Monitor the impact of all action plans and revise as necessary.
6. Conduct meetings with appropriate staff in relation to pupils whose attendance is showing a concern.
7. Identify PA pupils who need specialised intervention and refer these to Pastoral Support.
8. Carry out home visits when necessary.
9. Monitor registers and meet with appropriate Staff and Governors regularly to promote high rates of attendance and punctuality.
10. Meet fortnightly with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) to discuss attendance issues, so that he has a thorough knowledge of the academy's attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER

1. Liaise regularly with Pastoral Support Manager/Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
2. Record absences and reasons given.
3. Liaise with Pastoral Leads and Pastoral Support Managers regarding first day calls and home visits.
4. Monitor all absence of pupils and hold regular data sharing meetings.
5. Contact parents where necessary to support pupils.
6. Liaise with Academy Education Welfare Officer where necessary.
7. Implement reward systems.
8. Implement procedures to parents where attendance falls below 96% as follows:
 - Concern of Absence letter (COA) will be sent if pupil's attendance falls below school target of 96% for any reason.
 - A School Based Meeting (SBM) to be held with parent, Pastoral Support Manager/Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Year Group Pastoral Support Manager if there is any further absence
 - Should absence still be an issue an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) will be held – this will involve our Academy Education Welfare Officer and will be officially recorded on paper for evidence if the case

were to be referred to the Missing Education and Child Employment Service.

9. Initiate strategies to promote full attendance via newsletter.
10. Liaise with ICT technical staff to ensure full implementation of all aspects of electronic registration.
11. Monitor twice daily registration and ensure all notation is accurately recorded.
12. Monitor lesson registration to ensure pupils are attending lessons so that accurate information can be given to Academy Education Welfare Officer and parents.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ACADEMY EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

1. Liaise with the Pastoral Support Manager/Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Attendance Officer, Pastoral Support Managers and Deputy Headteacher responsible for overseeing Attendance matters in ensuring that all pupils attend school regularly and punctually.
2. Conduct a late-gate policy every day and liaise with parents and appropriate staff where necessary.
3. Conduct truancy visits daily for identified pupils as necessary.
4. Conduct home visits/welfare calls daily for pupils **even if** a phone call has been received explaining absence. This is in order to safeguard the welfare of all pupils.
5. Conduct Attendance Improvement Meetings with appropriate staff in relation to pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern.