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**Prospect**  
School

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

Staff Responsible	Deputy Headteacher
Date Approved	November 2017

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Aims and Values**

The school staff, alongside Reading Borough Council and the DfE, firmly believe that all students benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

The school recognises that attendance and achievement are obviously linked. The expectation at Prospect School is that every student's attendance is above 95%. Encouraging regular, punctual attendance is desirable as well as a legal requirement. The majority of students achieve a high rate of attendance which will be formally recognised through the rewards system. The school will be vigilant in its approach to those who display a broken attendance record or whose absence is unauthorised.

### **Expectations**

#### **Role of the student**

We expect that all students will:

- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day;
- discuss attendance issues promptly with their Form Tutor/Class Teacher, Head of Year, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Attendance Officer or any other appropriate member of staff;
- bring a letter from home on their return to explain any absences.

#### **Role of the parent/carer**

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- telephone the school on the first and subsequent day of any absence;
- after their child's absence send a letter of explanation on their return to school;
- ensure that they contact the school in advance whenever the child/children is/are unable to attend school for medical or other reasons;
- it is expected that parents will make every effort to arrange absence such as students' medical treatment, holiday etc. outside school hours so that the disruption to their learning is kept to a minimum;
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

## Role of the school

We expect the school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all students in all lessons;
- monitor students' attendance at registration and in all subject lessons;
- encourage good attendance;
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children;
- provide a safe learning environment;
- provide a sympathetic response to any student's concerns;
- the school's Attendance Officer will contact the parents/carers of any students with an unexplained absence;
- the Form Tutors, in consultation with Heads of Year will monitor the absence of students, and where necessary, liaise with the Attendance Officer to investigate unexplained or prolonged absence;
- work proactively and reactively with the Education Welfare Service as appropriate;
- parents to be reminded termly of their legal duty to ensure their child's attendance at school, and reminded of the implications of non-attendance through Fixed Penalty Notices;
- the Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Officer will also monitor teachers' register taking and teachers who fail to take their registers will be notified.

## **Rewards/Monitoring of Good Attendance**

Each Form Tutor is to encourage full attendance for his/her tutees: Strategies will include:

- following any period of absence, students should be welcomed back to school, and where necessary, the Head of Year will carry out a reintegration interview;
- students with full 100% attendance for a term will be entered into a prize draw at the end of term;
- each Tutor/Head of Year to read and use monthly attendance analysis data for their tutor group/Year;
- each Head of Year will meet fortnightly with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance to discuss attendance issues, which the Assistant Headteacher may refer to the Education Welfare Service;
- students where attendance is causing concern will be discussed with the Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Officer, who will advise on the most appropriate course of action.

## **Non-Attendance**

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school each day on time. Parents are asked to contact the school by telephone on the first day of absence and to then send their child back into school as soon as they are well enough, with an absence note detailing the reason for the absence with dates. If truancy is suspected, the parents/carers will be contacted at the first opportunity.

Students returning to school after an absence, even if telephone notification has been received, will be required to present a written explanation. A proforma will be available for completion, issued by the Attendance Officer via the Form Tutor if notification of absence was not received. Students with longer periods of absence may be invited to a reintegration interview with their Head of Year on their return.

### **Broken Attendance**

Any student with less than 92% attendance in a term will be monitored by the Form Tutor and a proforma letter sent home. Students with less than 90% attendance may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer and parents informed. The Education Welfare Officer will act on referrals from the Head of Year/Assistant Headteacher and may visit/contact the parents and/or meet with the Head of Year/Assistant Headteacher to discuss progress/strategies. Students whose attendance continues to be a concern will trigger other strategies available to the Education Welfare Officer. The Assistant Headteacher will contact the appropriate outside agencies to highlight the concern and discuss which strategies are available.

Procedure for attendance concerns:

- attendance printouts giving individual attendance percentages;
- letter from school/telephone call highlighting concerns;
- continuing pattern to be highlighted to parents via Head of Year;
- meeting with parents with Tutor/Head of Year;
- continuing attendance concern – less than 90% attendance;
- referral to Education Welfare Officer and parents notified;
- network meeting with parents, Education Welfare Officer, SENCo, etc;
- Fixed Penalty Notice/Court Order/Education Supervision Order organised by Education Welfare Officer.

### **Late Attendance**

The school day starts at 8.25am and all students should be on site by this time and in their form rooms by 8.30am. Regular and punctual attendance is to be expected and failures will be sanctioned.

#### Sanctions

Occasional lateness (less than three in a week): discussion with Attendance Officer on arrival in school

Continued lateness (more than three in a week): discussion with Attendance Officer on arrival in school and punctuality detention after school on Friday

Still continued: Placed on punctuality report and letter home/Head of Year/Education Welfare Officer referral

Late arrival at lessons will be monitored by the subject teacher. Detentions to be issued for continued lateness and Head of Department informed.

## **Student Returning after Absence**

All staff need to encourage continued attendance by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment and by responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other students.

The Form Tutor is to welcome back the students and instigate reintegration with the form.

Subject teachers are to make the necessary arrangements, e.g. have photocopied work available and ensure that only the essential tasks are demanded.

The SENCo will work closely with the Head of Year/Education Welfare Officer/parents for reintegration programmes for school refusers.

The Head of Year may wish to hold a reintegration interview with the student.

## **Post Registration Truancy**

Students out of lessons must have their planner signed by the relevant member of staff. Initially, the subject teachers will check individual group lists against the daily absence list. There will be occasional spot checks organised by the Heads of Department and Senior Leadership Team.

A specific check needs to be kept on students who have previously truanted, Heads of Year to identify those at the weekly briefings. Subject teachers to inform Pastoral Manager/Head of Year of any students known to be truanting their lesson. If students are still 'missing', parents will be informed immediately by telephone. Head of Year will follow up truancy. Students may be placed on attendance report.

## **Term Time Absence - holidays**

Parents should not take their child on holiday in term time - it can be disruptive both to the student's learning and to the school. Holidays in term time will almost always be unauthorised and are likely to be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Only in very exceptional circumstances will a holiday, or time out of school to travel, be authorised. Applications should be made as far in advance of the holiday as possible and parents should speak to the school before anything is booked.

If students return to school after more than 10 days of unauthorised absence for a holiday, the school may remove them from the school roll, and they will need to re-apply for a school place.

## **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if their child is absent from school without permission. This can include parents who take their children on holiday during term time without getting authorisation from the school.

The penalty is currently £60 for those who pay within 21 days, rising to £120 for those

who pay within 28 days, per student, per parent.

## **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform the Headteacher/Head of Year as soon as possible in writing. A student will not be removed from the school's roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the student will be leaving this school and starting at the next;
- the address of the new school;
- the new home address, if it is known.

The student's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the students at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

Headteacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- adopt the whole policy;
- ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the third day of absence;
- ensure that Assistant Headteacher – Students/Heads of Year have time-table periods for liaison and follow-up work with the Education Welfare Service and appropriate access to attendance data;
- consult and liaise closely with the Education Welfare Service on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate students are identified and referred without delay;
- to work in close collaboration with the Education Welfare Service during their termly/register analysis;
- monitor and evaluate attendance with the Education Welfare Service.

Head of Year

- to monitor the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually by Tutors;
- to liaise with the Education Welfare Service regularly;
- to reinforce good practice at Year assemblies;
- to share the Form Tutors concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Education Welfare Officer;

- to ensure a regular and robust focus on attendance through assemblies, certificates and Rewards.

#### Form Tutors

- to complete form registers accurately and punctually;
- to follow up any unexplained non-attendance/lateness;
- to record all reasons for absences in the register;
- to inform the Head of Year of concerns;
- to be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Head of Year.

#### Subject Teachers

- to keep an accurate subject register for every class; to follow up unexplained non-attendance;
- to impose sanction for lateness to lessons;
- to keep Head of Department informed of concerns.

#### Sixth Form

Sixth Formers are expected to attend all lessons and independent study periods. As young adults, members of the Sixth Form are expected to take greater personal responsibility for ensuring their regular attendance at registration and at all time-tabled lessons. Unexpected absences will be followed up by Tutors and by the Head of Sixth Form, if necessary. Parents will be informed when attendance is a matter of concern.

#### **Monitoring**

Attendance data analysis weekly, monthly, termly and annually.

#### **Evaluation**

This will take place annually by the Assistant Headteacher who will report to the Senior Leadership Team and Governors on attendance levels and the effectiveness of the policy.

#### **Supporting Documentation**

An Attendance Action Plan is in place and regularly reviewed.