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Attendance Policy

Policy updated May 2017



SIDDAL
MOOR

Where students *fly high* through the
expectation of *excellence* in *everything* we do

Siddal Moor Attendance Policy

The vast majority of students want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities. Research shows that student achievement and life chances are linked to attendance. Regular school attendance is crucial if the young people of Siddal Moor Sports College are to achieve their potential and meet the five outcomes of “Every Child Matters”:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic success

To this end, the school will do as much as it can to ensure that all students achieve maximum possible attendance, to keep in line with the National target of 95% and that any problems affecting attendance will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

Aims:

- The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.
- All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure that each student attends school regularly and punctually.
- The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- To meet these objectives, the school will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice, guidance and support.
- The school will develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

Expectations:

We expect that all students will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.
- Discuss with a member of staff any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

We expect all parents and carers to:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities to ensure their child attends school.

- Ensure that their child arrives punctually and prepared for the school day.
- Contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Inform the school on the first day of absence and send a written note on their return to school, for absences of three or more days' duration.
- Contact the school whenever any problems occur that may keep the child away from school.
- Provide medical evidence when appropriate to support absence.
- Refrain from booking family holidays during school term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.
- Arrange, wherever possible, for medical appointments to be made outside school hours. If this is unavoidable, then the child should be removed from school for the minimum amount of time possible.

We expect the school (staff and governors) to:

- Encourage good school attendance and provide a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and monitor all students' attendance.
- Contact the parents or carers on the first day, or as soon as possible when there is unexplained or irregular absence.
- Keep parents informed about attendance issues and report regularly to them on their child's attendance record.
- Complete registers accurately at the beginning of each session.
- Provide appropriate and relevant rewards to individuals and groups in recognition of excellent or improving attendance.
- Analyse and respond to attendance data at year group, form and individual student level.
- Monitor punctuality daily, enforcing rewards and sanctions where necessary.
- Work in partnership with other agencies, particularly the Education Welfare Service, to identify and support those students and families who have attendance problems.
- As well as supporting students, have full access to the legal frame work surrounding attendance and be up to date with changes in government policies.
- Implement the resources of Penalty Notices, Fast Track, and court processes to maintain standards throughout the school.
- Implement the process of LEAP panels, to support and guide the student and parents through the legal process.
- Identify members of staff for parents to contact if they have concerns that their child may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.

Responding to non-attendance:

When a student does not attend, the school needs to respond effectively. Siddal Moor has a range of intervention strategies to address irregular attendance. School action could include:

- If a note or telephone call is not received from home, contact with the family on the first day of absence either by telephone, text or email.
- A standard letter to bring to the attention of the parents that absence has been identified as a concern.
- An interview with the student to obtain the child's perception of the problem.
- An attempt to engage with the parents to discuss the attendance difficulties.
- Home visits to the home when communication with the parent cannot be made.
- Home visits to be undertaken by two members of staff to ensure safeguarding of staff.
- Referral to the Education Welfare Officer who will undertake home visits and hold attendance panels in school.
- A letter warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice
- A Penalty Notice.
- Fast track to court.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be categorised by the school (not the parent) as either Authorised or Unauthorised. This is why information about the reason for any absence is always required.

Authorised absence:

Authorised absence is defined as absence as a result of:

- Illness for which an adequate explanation has been given
- Religious observation
- Medical or other evidence has been supplied.
- A student serving a fixed day exclusion
- Medical or dental appointment supported by an appointment card
- Exceptional circumstances, at the Headteacher's discretion
- Family holiday approved by the Headteacher (see holiday section below)

Unauthorised absence:

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave of absence has been given.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which are not properly explained
- Illness in the school year cannot be authorised without medical evidence.
- Students who arrive at school too late to get a morning mark
- Morning registers close at 9.30 am, arrival after this time is unauthorised
- Shopping, looking after other children, waiting for a tradesman, service engineer or a delivery, or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

Holidays in term time:

Holidays in term time will not be authorised.

Any holiday will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as Penalty Notice if the student's attendance rate falls into Persistent Absence category as a result of the absence.

Punctuality:

Students should arrive at school on time. A bell will ring at 8.40am to signal school is about to start. By 8.45 am students should be in their room for official registration.

Any student who is late will have a detention that day. If your child is going to be late for school for a valid reason please ring school to inform, or provide your child with a note of explanation.

Students must report to the reception office to sign in if they arrive after 9.00am. If a student needs to leave school early they need to bring a note or appointment card to Student Services to enable them to get permission to leave school.

Telephone numbers:***School reception***

01706 369436

Mrs Barton – Pastoral Office

01706 362256

Miss Keenan – Inclusion Manager

01706 369436