



SMITHDON HIGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed: September 2019

Next Review Date: September 2020

Rationale

Smithdon High School under the West Norfolk Academies Trust is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We have developed a policy in order to give a consistent response to all students and families in our care.

We want to do our best for all our children and believe that regular attendance at school is vital as it promotes good learning, positive attitudes and maintains continuity in their education and friendships. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without good reason is an offence by a parent.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills.

Each year the West Norfolk Academies Trust will examine their attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Norfolk attendance targets. The West Norfolk Academies Trust will discuss their attendance figures and the success of this policy on an annual basis and will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure it is achieving the set goals.

Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at morning or afternoon registration must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). If there is no known reason for the absence at registration then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.30am and the registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after 30 minutes will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation, such as delayed school transport. Where absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Medical evidence will be required to support the absence.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of registration period will be treated as present but will be coded as late before the register closes. Students who arrive after 8.30am should report to reception to sign in and record the reason for lateness.

First Day of Absence

On the first day of absence, parents and carers should contact the school, you can do this by telephoning 01485 536119 or emailing pastoralstaff@smithdonhigh.org.uk before the registration period closes at 9.00am. If no contact has been made, the Pastoral Team will contact parents via the automated messaging service called Truancy Call. We will continue to make daily contact until a response is received and will also make general enquiries during this time. This will include trying other contact numbers and/or email addresses. If we have no response within 4 days of continued absence, we may use staff or Police to visit the home address.

Ten Days' Absence

Any pupil who is absent without explanation for ten consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority as a 'Child Missing Education', by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Children in Need Team. This is a legal requirement and the school will include details of the action they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns.

We monitor attendance closely and if a pupil's attendance falls lower than the national average, their parents will be contacted by the school. We will look for patterns and reasons for absence making parents aware of the number of absences and the importance of good attendance. In other cases the school will seek advice from the Local Authority Attendance Team where action may include Fix Penalty Notice and/or Attendance Fast Track System.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupils receive help to catch up on missed work and updated on any important information that may have been given out during their absence.

Promoting Attendance

Smithdon High School works actively together with the West Norfolk Academies Trust to improve attendance in our area and give consistent messages about the importance of good attendance. The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers of their responsibility to ensure their children receive a good education and will make clear links between attendance and attainment.

The school will use a computerised system for maintaining attendance records.

Information regarding attendance and procedures can be found on the school's website.

Attendance Awards

Smithdon High School will reward pupils who have good or improving attendance, in particular through praising the individual child and by awarding certificates for 100% attendance on a termly basis.

Holidays in Term Time

Leave will not be granted for the purpose of a family holiday, which will be recorded as unauthorised. Latest Government guidelines do state that Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave but only in exceptional circumstance

Government guidelines also states that 'Parents can be fined for taking their child/children on holiday during term time without consent from the school', Department for Education July 2013.

Request for authorised absence should be made using a Leave of Absence form which is available from the school reception.

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Important Information for Parents

- Head teachers comply with the 2013 amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (2006) Regulations 2013 which means that they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional; every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances. Ultimately, it is the Head teacher of the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not
- Head teachers may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed
- If leave of absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the parent who intends to remove the pupil from school during term time
- Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Full name of child/ren.....

Address.....

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From (1st day of absence) To (last day of absence)

Total number of school days.....Expected date of return to school

Reason for proposed absence - please provide reasons to support the application including evidence:

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Please read the following and sign to indicate you agree:

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time, and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I undertake to make sure my child/ren catch up with any work that is required of them.

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s):

Date:

Your request for leave of absence from school during term time has been considered and has been:

Agreed ☐

Days agreed ☐

Not agreed ☐

Signature of Headteacher: