

CAMROSE PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH NURSERY

Attendance Policy

"Schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all...."

National Curriculum 2000



Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Status- Strongly Recommended

Prepared by S Crick

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Review: Autumn 2023 or as necessary

Camrose Primary School Attendance Policy

Introduction and Background

Camrose Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment. This policy is written with these factors in mind. This policy underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and wellbeing.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils are equipped to access the widest possible range of opportunities on leaving school.

We recognise that attendance has implications for safeguarding. For our pupils to gain the maximum benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and potentially their social circle, their self-esteem, their confidence and their attitude towards school and learning. A pupil's absence or late arrival also disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. We therefore treat non-attendance and punctuality very seriously.

Parents have the responsibility for ensuring their child's attendance at school. At Camrose Primary School we work actively with parents to ensure that a regular pattern of pupil attendance is maintained. Where this is not the case we will ensure early intervention to prevent the situation from deteriorating.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility: parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

- The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.
- We will give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- We will display class attendance weekly in the main school entrance.
- We will report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance in the annual school report.
- We will contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below 92%
- Good attendance will be celebrated through individual certificates and rewards for the best class attendance; attendance is promoted through the awarding of a trophy to the best attended class in EYFS/KS1 and KS2. The class who receives the trophy the most often will win an additional award at the end of each half term.
- The Attendance Officer and Learning Mentor work with parents and pupils where attendance is an issue. This could include visiting the home;
- Close contact will be maintained with parents of children who are persistent absentees.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is essential.

Authorised absences are either morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a good reason, i.e. illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, religious observance or other unavoidable reasons.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. Some absences could result in a referral to Early Intervention Services and/or the Court Attendance Officer. These include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Truancy before or during the school day;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark;
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

We recognise that a child may at times be reluctant to attend school for reasons other than those which are authorised. It is important to identify these children very quickly so that appropriate support can be given to the child and family. Support could involve working with the Learning Mentor or outside agencies.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this issue.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately of our concern. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek involvement from the Learning Mentor and Inclusion Team to see whether the child can be supported in overcoming any issues. If all this has little effect, then the school will refer to Early Intervention Services or complete a Common Assessment Framework form.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully on a weekly basis and we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan which may include individual incentive programmes or individual targets.

School Procedures

The school has adopted a 'soft start' approach, where children arrive from 8.30am-8.45am.

Morning registration is at 8.50am

The registers will close at 9.00am

Afternoon registration is at 1.05pm

The registers will close at 1.10pm

All staff involved in registration must ensure that the roll is called within the times agreed. At Camrose Primary School this process is electronic.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher, or a member of staff acting on their behalf, can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. There may also be times when an absence will be unauthorised even though the

reason for the absence is known, for example, if a child is taken shopping by the parent, or on an extended holiday.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50am. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes in the class and thereafter the child will need to go to the office to sign in. Any pupil arriving 30 minutes after the close of the register will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

Lateness will be taken very seriously and parents will be informed when a child has been late more than 3 times.

First Day Absence

If a child is to be absent from school, parents/carers must contact the school to inform us of the reason. Failure to do so will mean that the school will contact the home to find out the reasons. This is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer who checks the registers each day for absences. This information is kept electronically on SIMs. The school has an answer phone to enable parents to leave messages in the event that they cannot get through to a member of staff.

Third Day Absence

Camrose Primary School will contact parents if a child has been absent for more than two days and the school has not been kept updated by a parent.

Continuing Absence

In the case of continuing absence the school will endeavour to contact parents by phone, email or letter. Where these are unsuccessful, we will refer the child to Early Intervention Services for advice as to the ways forward.

Ten Days Absence

Any pupil who is absent, without an explanation, for 10 consecutive days will be referred to the Local Authority (via a CAF) through the MASH team. If contact cannot be made with parents or carers, despite phone calls, home visits and letters, then the child is deemed missing from education (CME) so referral is essential.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. Where possible this will include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence are filed in the child's school folder so that they are available if an investigation is required.

Holidays in term time (Leave for exceptional circumstances)

Holidays during term time are not allowed. Therefore, such absences will be unauthorised due to the inevitable disruption to learning. However, some parents may request leave for exceptional circumstances. They will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. All applications for leave must be made in advance and, at the discretion of the school, a maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

We will not agree leave during term time under the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS) for year 6 pupils.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below the school's target of 95% for any individual or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.
- When the leave requested is for a holiday.
- Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed will be classed as unauthorised and may result in the child being taken off the school roll.
- From September 2013, the school will not authorise requests for term-time holidays **even when the above criteria do not apply.**

Religious Absence

Pupils are permitted 1 day authorised absence during term time. Any additional days will be unauthorised.

Use of Penalty Notices

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices for failure to ensure regular school attendance. ***Parents or carers who take their children on holiday in term time without school's permission or are late returning from an extended holiday, may receive a Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent per child, which must be paid within 28 days.*** If payment is made after 28 days but within 42 days, the penalty is increased to £120. Where a fine remains unpaid after 42 days, the matter will be referred to the Borough Solicitor, who will consider instigating criminal proceedings.

Please note that Penalty Notices can be issued after 20 unauthorised absences in a 12-week period – this is 20 registration periods, i.e. 10 days. Children who are late without good reason after registration closes (9.05) also receive an unauthorised absence mark. EPNs will also be issued for children who have 10 consecutive unauthorised absences (10 sessions/5 days).

Attendance Certificates

The school will award weekly certificates to any class that achieves 100% attendance.

The school will give certificates at the end of each term for any child who has maintained a 100% attendance.

Equal Opportunities

- We will ensure that we enable all parents to access the information on attendance by providing translations in the relevant language.
- We will also be clear of the religious observances of each of the communities we serve.

Attendance Targets

The school sets attendance targets each year with the Governing Body. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and the Headteacher will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Camrose Primary School will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. We will keep Governors informed through the ABC Committee of attendance and whether we have achieved or are on the way to achieving our statutory target.

Security

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years. Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes. (Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three years.)

Registers must be kept secure at all times.

Guidelines

The school uses a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information. Please note that these codes are subject to change.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity (counts as present)
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity (counts as present)
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity (counts as present)
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity (counts as present)
X	Non-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 1

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

This would include:

- School trips and school
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration