

System and Thurmaston Educational Partnership (STEP) Attendance and Punctuality Policy

STEP schools seeks to ensure that all their children receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each child to realise his/her full potential. We expect all children on roll to attend every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy to do so.

Once a child is enrolled at school parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day. It is also important that children arrive punctually for the start of the school day.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the Governing Body is responsible for making sure that the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This register will also indicate whether an absence was 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

Definition of 'authorised absence'

- An absence is classified as authorised when the school has ascertained that a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised.

Definition of 'unauthorised absence'

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent/carer.
- The absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer.

AIMS

To encourage and assist all children to achieve excellent levels of attendance of above 95%

To maximise attendance across the school population and reduce persistent absenteeism (below 85%)

Work together with parents/carers in both a supportive and challenging role to achieve high levels of attendance

CHILDREN

All children are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and to arrive on time.
- Come to school prepared to learn.
- Talk to a member of staff if there is a problem causing them to miss school.

PARENTS/CARERS

Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance at school in accordance with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. They should ensure that:

- Their child attends and is punctual.

- They inform the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call on each morning of absence. The school will then make the decision to either authorise or unauthorise the absence.
- They understand that holidays in term time are not an entitlement and can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- They make medical and dental appointments outside school time wherever possible
- They give the school up to date information regarding diagnosed medical conditions which may affect attendance
- They provide the school with up to date contact details

STEP Academies will:

- Strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels valued and secure.
- Establish an effective system to recognise the efforts of children to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those children and parents who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise that all young people who fall below the DofE threshold of 85% will be identified as 'Persistent Absentees' and will treat them as a vulnerable group of children who warrant additional support.

Registration

Registration is a legal requirement and creates an orderly start to the school day. Children arriving after the registers are taken will receive a late mark. Any child arriving 15 minutes after the start of school will receive a 'U' code in the register which equates to an unauthorised absence if there is no reasonable explanation for the lateness.

Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

The registers will be coded in accordance with the Department of Education mandatory codes.

All absences must be explained by a parent or carer. The school will then decide whether or not to authorise the absence.

Any unexplained absence will be unauthorised.

Absence may be authorised due to:

- Sickness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances

If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence to substantiate their reasons before the absence can be authorised.

Exceptional Leave

The school recognise that there may be times when a child requires exceptional leave during term time for short periods of time. In these circumstances parents/carers are asked to write the Headteacher to request the absence. These requests will be considered by the Headteacher on an individual basis.

Procedures for Following Up Absence/Lateness

If a student is absent and no reason has been provided by 9.15am school will contact parents as part of the safeguarding procedure.

If no reason has been provided regarding a child's absence further contact will be made with parents/carers requesting this information.

School attendance records are completed daily and stored electronically for future reference.

Attendance data will be collected and analysed to help identify patterns, set targets and inform pastoral and curriculum practices.

Parents/carers will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Every effort will be made to resolve attendance problems with parents/carers and pupils but where problems persist the Local Authority court team will be informed and requested to initiate legal proceedings.

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of The Pochin School on 30 April 2013.

It will reviewed by April 2016.