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## Attendance Policy 2019

Skelton Primary School offers a positive, safe learning environment for its community, in which everyone has equal and individual recognition and respect. We celebrate success and are committed to the continuous improvement and fulfilment of potential in every child.

We encourage increasing independence and self-discipline amongst the pupils. Everyone within the school has an important role to play in sharing responsibility for the development of positive behavior and attitudes.

**Presented to Governors: Autumn 2018**



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# ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

## Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

From September 2013, parents no longer have the right to request leave of absence for their children for an annual holiday. The amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations make clear that Head Teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is improving or very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school. We are committed to working with families to address any problems that impede full attendance promptly. Our Family Support Worker is available to provide support and advice to all families

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

## Definitions

### **Authorised absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones the school or writes a note to explain the absence.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents/ carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without good reason (i.e. without the permission of the school) even if the parent is supporting the absence.



# ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

## Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:-

- Attend school regularly and understand the need for doing so.
- Arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the school day.
- Inform a teacher of any problems that might hinder them from attending school.

We expect that all parents/ carers will:-

- Encourage their children to attend school and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Work in partnership with school to encourage high attendance of pupils.
- Ensure that they contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time, well prepared for the school day.
- Contact the Family Support Worker in confidence should any problem occur that might keep their child away from school.
- Try to ensure that appointments and holidays are taken out of school time
- Notify school immediately of any change in contact details

Parents and children can expect the following from the school:-

- A high quality education for their children.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recordings of attendance.
- First day contact before 10.00 am (and each subsequent day of absence) when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- A letter will be sent home if an explanation for an absence or regular lateness is not received.
- Contact with parents/ carers if a child is regularly late for school.
- Immediate and confidential action will be taken on any problem brought to the attention of staff.
- Steps will be taken to encourage good attendance.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

# Attendance Procedures

Every child is expected to attend school for at least 97%+ of the year, ideally 100%! In the event of a child being absent parents/carers are asked to contact school, on a daily basis before the school day begins. A telephone messaging system is in place to ensure this is as easy as possible for parents.

Registers are taken via the SIMs system in the classroom. If a child is absent the teacher will put an **N** code next to their name. Registration closes at 08.45am and registers are saved on the system. Children arriving after 08.45am report to the office and parents/carers are asked to fill in a late slip, the child is then given a sticker to ensure the teacher knows they have been marked present.

The Office team check every registration groups register on the computer, cross-checking with the 'absence' book and late slips. They input the correct codes for each child that is absent.

- Children arriving after 8.45 receive a late mark in the register - **L**.
- Children arriving after 9.45 receive **U** code, if late not justified
- A medical appointment is recorded as **M**.
- An illness is recorded as **I**.

The Office write a list of all the children with no reason for absence and will contact home before 10.00am, asking why the child is not in school. If no contact can be made, a home visit will be made to ascertain child's wellbeing. A request will also be made that parents/carers send a letter to explain their child's absence. If a reason is given, this is noted in the register and amended on the computer.

Letters from parents/ carers explaining absences are filed in the office.

Every week letters to parents/ carers asking for reasons for absence where no contact has been made with or by school are generated from the office. The absence is then marked as **O** for unauthorised, if no reason is provided.

1. Children going out for medical appointments are signed out by the office staff in the 'Children leaving school' book.
2. Children sent home ill are signed out by the office staff in the 'Children leaving school' book.
3. Children coming in from medical appointments are signed in by the parents at reception.

## Unauthorised absence

Absence without a valid reason or explanation is recorded as **Unauthorised**. Examples are:- shopping trips, hairdressers, birthdays, allowing a whole day for a medical/dental appointment, helping parents, holidays. In addition, a pupil whose attendance is a cause for concern will not have any absence authorised without medical evidence. Unauthorised absences will result in Family Support Worker intervention which in turn is likely to result in a referral to the Attendance Welfare Office intervention and the issuing of a fine. We pride ourselves on working with our families and urge parents/ carers to do the same.

## Leaving Site During the School Day

- Leave for medical/dental appointments may be given where confirmation has been received from the parent/ carer (in person, writing or telephone call). Such absences are authorised.
- Pupils leaving the premises during the school day must have their absence and return recorded in the 'Children leaving school' book Letters sent to teachers are sent to the office.
- Wherever possible, children should remain in school before and return to school after medical/dental appointments.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

# Requests for leave of absence

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are **really exceptional** circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. a special event such as a wedding, funeral. We expect parents to contact the school at least four weeks in advance when circumstances allow.

From September 2013, parents no longer have the right to request leave of absence for their children for an annual holiday.

The amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations make clear that Head Teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. We recognise that the employment of parents and carers can impact on choices regarding holidays; if holidays are dictated by the employer (e.g. for armed forces or emergency services personnel), rather than just availability of holidays as part of an employer's rota this will be considered. Written proof from the employer will be required, this could include the holiday allocation policy and dates allocated for the year in question.

If there are exceptional circumstances "Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted."

Each request will be judged on its own merits. We use the following guidelines to decide whether such requests for absence will be granted:

- Permission will **not** be given to children in Year 2 or Year 6 preparing for SATs (January through to end of June), permission will **not** be given to children if they will be absent for SATs or other standardised tests for example the Year 1 Phonics Check (School will provide information well in advance as dates become available)
- Permission will **not** be given in September
- Permission will **not** be given for children who have a poor attendance and/ or punctuality record (Usually attendance less than 95% in the current and previous year would be considered unsatisfactory in this respect.)

Long-term absence/ holiday absence taken without approval will be recorded as an unauthorised and a referral will be made to the Attendance Welfare Service who will then decide, in conjunction with the Head Teacher, on the appropriate action to take. This will be either a formal written warning or the issue of a Penalty Notice.

A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 issued to each parent if paid between 1 - 21 days after issue, increasing to £120 if paid between 21 - 28 days. If payment is not received within 28 days you may be prosecuted for the offence of non-school attendance under Section 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and could be fined up to £2500 and / or receive a prison sentence of up to three months.

Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave granted exceed in total more than one week in any school year. No parent can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as a right.

### Repeated absences and lateness

The school regularly monitors the attendance and punctuality of all children. The Attendance Welfare Officer (AWO) regularly visits the school to monitor attendance figures and discuss specific cases where attendance patterns are a cause for concern. The AWO will send a letter, or telephone the parent or carer, or may visit the home to ensure that they understand the seriousness of the situation. The LA, supported by the governors, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/ carers who take their child out of school when the absence has not been authorised and/or who fail to provide proof of regular absences and/or repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Children who are repeatedly late for school will also have this reported to the Local Authority. The School website provides clear guidance on the times that families should adhere to.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

# Penalty Notices

**Note the school does not issue or administer Penalty Notices and, once issued, has no powers over their enforcement**

When a child has an illness that means they will be away from school for an extended period, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work, if appropriate.

If the absence is likely to continue for a greatly extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact other support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

Work will **not** be provided for pupils who are absent due to holidays.

# Religious Observation

Authorised absence can be granted for attendance or observation of festivals of the religion to which the parents belong.

# Encouraging Good Behaviour & Punctuality

The school will encourage good attendance and punctuality in the following ways:-

1. Parents will be informed of the schools' procedures for monitoring and recording school attendance. Further information for parents can be found in the school's brochure and on the website.
2. Attendance Assembly is held every Monday.
3. Attendance information is shared on the weekly 'Friday Flyer'.
4. Classroom door signs display the class' weekly total.
5. Parents are informed of individual data twice a year on school reports
6. Any family identified through the Care team are invited to attend a Nurture breakfast daily at 8am. Children can join the group and bring their family if they choose.

### Acknowledging and Encouraging good attendance

- All the children who have 100% attendance in any one term receive a treat. (Children with medical appointments who have notified school and return to school within the school day will not compromise their attendance record)
- All children with 100% attendance Sept- June) attend a celebration attendance trip in July (Y6 receive a voucher).
- Any class with 100% attendance for a week receive cookies in Attendance assembly and have responsibility for looking after Albert Bear for the week.

### Acknowledging and Encouraging good punctuality

- Any class with 100% attendance and punctuality for a day receive a gold coin to bank and invest in classroom wet playtime equipment of their choice
- A walking bus will be established in Autumn term providing safe and supervised route to school from Sainsbury's at 8.20 daily.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

# Responding to Non Attendance

The school uses the following procedures where non-attendance occurs:-

- Parents are regularly informed of the steps that will be taken by the school in response to non-attendance, or when attendance is giving cause for concern.
- Staff are aware of all procedures and of their responsibilities with regard to attendance and punctuality.

Attendance is given a high priority in school. This message must be conveyed to the pupils by the behaviour and example of staff.

This means that pupils should see that teachers arrive promptly for school/lessons and that they are prepared and well organised for the next school session.

We adopt the **REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL ATTENDANCE & WELFARE SERVICE, SCHOOL ATTENDANCE GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE.**

## Children Missing in Education

Skelton Primary School will follow the Redcar and Cleveland Policy and procedures for Children Missing in Education. The LA defines a Child Missing in Education (CME) as:

**“All children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, nor being educated at home (privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more)”.**

See Appendix 1 for LA procedures for a Child Missing in Education.

## Legal Framework

### Duty of Parents

- Education Act 1944 Section 36 (as amended)

### Duty of LA

- Education Act 1993 Sections 192-202
- DFE Circular 11/91
- Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991
- School Attendance – Policy and Practice in Categorisation of Absence- DFE 1994
- Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981
- Education Act 1944 Section 80

## Attendance Welfare Officer

The principal function of the AWO is to help parents and Local Authorities meet their statutory obligations on school attendance. We value the help and support that the AWO is able to give school in establishing clear procedures in relation to attendance and value the advice that they can offer where legal references might be required.

We welcome effective collaboration between the AWO and the school and recognise that this can improve attendance rates significantly.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

### Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance. The Head Teacher reports to the Governing Body on attendance issues in the termly Head Teacher's Report. The Governing Body has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

Class teachers, the office and the Head Teacher collectively monitor attendance. If the class teacher is concerned about a child's absence, they contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Head Teacher.

A detailed report on each child's attendance is included with their annual report in order to keep their parent or carer fully informed.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Skelton Primary School remains available to clarify and particular aspects of the policy where an uncertainty exists. Ignorance of the policy will not be accepted as reasoned grounds upon which to deem an unauthorised period of absence 'exceptional circumstances'



## Daily Attendance procedure protocol

1. Registers completed by 9am.
2. Absences gathered and checked against answer machines/ reported absence.
3. Create list of children absent with no explanation
4. Send out text message to encourage contact.
5. If still no contact from parents/ carers, ring ALL contacts on SIMS to address concerns about attendance.
6. If known to external support agencies (Social care etc) consider contacting them for further information.
7. Create a list of those still with unexplained absence and organise a home visit.
8. Consider Police referral if still concerned about a child's unexplained absence.



# Skelton Attendance Procedure Flow Chart

Stage 1 School Responsibilities

- Stage 1- 95-97% Attendance**
1. 1-3 day unauthorised absence office to contact parent(s) by phone/text and also at <97% if attendance continues to decline.
  2. Attendance concerns reported to class teachers by Family Support Worker weekly.
  3. School will issue Letter A when <97% after October 1<sup>st</sup> (and at discretion during September.)
  4. Letter B adds a further caution if no improvement is noted.
  5. Commend good attendance when consistency is noted.

Stage 2 Internal Referral

- Stage 2 Referral when attendance falls to <93%**
1. Letter C to be issued at 93% to invite parent/ carer to attend a school meeting from October 1st. (Family Support Worker discretion)
  2. Home visits made if appropriate- suspected holiday/ failure to attend
  3. Follow up home visits may be made by AWO where attendance has dropped below 90%. Referral to AWO to be completed.
  4. Proceed to Child Well Being/ Planning Meeting if targets are not achieved.
  5. Set attendance target and agree review date.
  6. Complete Early Help Assessment paperwork as appropriate.
  7. If targets are achieved, commend good attendance and return to Stage 1.

Stage 3 DOA Formal Interventions

- Stage 3 SPS instruct AWO and initiate Formal Intervention with initial ACC 90- 85%**
1. Attendance continues to deteriorate towards **85% with** no justifiable reason.
  2. Initial ACC – Attendance contract agreed or recommendations in parental absence.
  3. Penalty Notice Warning Letter, Court Warning letter may be issued or Parenting order letter.
  4. Review within 4-6 weeks (ACCR).
  5. If targets are achieved, commend good attendance, monitor and assess for closure.
  6. Commend, monitor and assess to ensure that improved attendance is sustained .
  7. Return to stage 1

Stage 4 AWS Legal Measures Initiated

- Stage 4A (AWS)**
- Prosecute parent(s) under Sec 444 Education Act 1996 and consider applying for Parenting Order.
  - Consider seeking Education Supervision Order.
  - Post court meeting- targets.
  - Review is target not achieved (fast track to Stage 3)



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

# Appendix 1- Children Missing in Education Procedures.

## Identifying a Child Missing Education

The local authority has a dedicated officer to support the development of procedures in this area in order to reduce the risk of children disengaging from the education system. The CME Officer is based within the Pupil Services Team enabling effective working links with School Admissions, Exclusions, Attendance & Welfare, Educational Psychology, Multicultural Service and Specialist Teaching Services.

The CME Officer will work in partnership with schools and key partners including Children's Services, Housing, Health, Looked After Children Team, Foundation for Jobs, Youth Offending, Traveller Education Service, Police and voluntary organisations to enable a multi-disciplinary approach to identifying children missing education.

All officers of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council have a joint responsibility for children missing education. If an officer becomes aware of any child who does not appear to be accessing education they should make a referral to the CME Officer.

Anyone may make a referral to the CME Officer including members of the public. There are a number of ways a referral can be made:

- By completing a CME Referral Form (Appendix 2)
- Email [cme@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:cme@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)
- Telephoning 01642 837721

A referral and monitoring system for children not on a school roll, at risk of missing education and those missing (destination known or otherwise) has been established. The CME Officer will manage and co-ordinate the referral process, maintaining and updating the CME database and act as a link officer with schools and other agencies or authorities, referring or tracking pupils out of school. The CME Officer will ensure that the referral procedures outlined in this document are understood and followed.

## The Role of the Local Authority

Officers within the Pupil Services Team have direct involvement with the local authority's procedures for monitoring and safeguarding children deemed vulnerable, exploited, missing or trafficked (VEMT), through the LSCB VEMT sub-group and operational groups. This ensures that concerns around child sexual exploitation or other VEMT risk factors for children (including those CME or at risk of CME) will be identified and referred in a timely manner for appropriate interventions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures.

This policy is intended to inform local authority officers, schools, academies, governing bodies and other agencies about appropriate procedures for identifying and maintaining contact with children missing from education and those at risk of going missing from education.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

This policy sets out how Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council fulfils its statutory duties in relation to children missing education and will also ensure that:

- Schools, academies, services and partner agencies are informed about their role in assisting the council in identifying children missing education;
- Robust multi-agency systems are in place to identify and track children missing education, or at risk of becoming so;
- Mechanisms available to re-engage pupils with education are clear.

A range of procedures and processes have been identified to limit the opportunity for children to go missing when they fall out of the education system, including:

- Identify and locate children missing education through working with other services and agencies;
- Ensure all CME referrals are recorded on a central register and monitored regularly;
- Re-engage those who have been missing with appropriate education;
- Identify children missing education through liaison with other local authorities and access to national databases;
- Develop existing systems to identify those at risk of becoming CME;
- Awareness raising through publicity.

### The Role of Schools and Academies

If a child leaves a Redcar & Cleveland school without school receiving notification from the parent/carer as to which new school the child is transferring to, the school should immediately notify the Attendance & Welfare Team.

If the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or at any stage during enquiries, if information comes to light that raises child protection/safeguarding concerns a referral should be made to Social Care and/or the Police.

Schools should not remove any child from their roll without completing a CME01 (Appendix 1) to ensure that all children removed from the school register are, in accordance with Regulation 8(h)(iii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.

The CME Officer monitors pupils who have been removed from roll to ensure that the legislation is followed and that no pupil is allowed to go missing from education.

The CME Officer tracks pupils removed from roll to ensure that they are admitted to another school or alternative education provision either within Redcar & Cleveland or another area.

### Working with Key Partners

All offices of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and other partners have a duty to work together to promote the welfare of children and share information. In order to achieve the strategic aims of the CME Policy all partner organisations in Redcar and Cleveland will work in collaboration to ensure early identification and intervention regarding children who are not receiving education.



# ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

## CME 01

### CHILDREN THOUGHT TO HAVE LEFT THE AREA CHECKLIST

This checklist is to be completed by the AWS team/School Attendance Officer in all cases where it would seem that a child has moved from the area, and the school at which the child is currently registered has not been informed of either a new address of school.

Name of child:.....

School:.....

		Date(s)/times	Action by	Response/result (Where appropriate name person/s)
1	All possible whereabouts checked with staff & pupils			
2	Pupil's emergency contact numbers checked			
3	AWS/School Attendance Officer to check with any known extended family and neighbours			
4	Central EMS database checked (via School Admissions/CME Officer)			
5	Checks made with other agencies involved with pupil e.g Social Care, Children's Services, Police, GP, Health Visitor, School Nurse.			

If, after completing the above checks, the child's whereabouts are still not determined please complete CME02 (CME Referral) and forward, along with a copy of this form to the CME Officer.

Please return to:  
CME Officer, Cooper Centre, South Bank. TS6 6SU.  
Email: [cme@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:cme@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)



# ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

**CME02**

## CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION REFERRAL FORM

*This form should be completed by professionals undertaking an assessment or who are aware of a child of compulsory school age who does not appear to have a place at a school or other provision arranged by the Local Authority. For additional help and guidance please contact the LA's CME Officer Tel: 01642 837721*

Child's Forename:		Child's Surname:	
Date of Birth:		Gender	
		Male/Female	
Name of parent/carer:			
Relationship to child:			
Address:			
Telephone No:			
Mobile No:			
School:		Year Group:	
Child's previous address if new to area:			
Reason for referral:			
Are other professionals involved with the family. Is the child looked after or do they have a Child Protection Plan?			
Contact Name:	Agency:	Contact number:	
Do you know if this child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs / Education Health Care Plan?			



# ATTENDANCE POLICY (statutory)

<b>PLEASE COMPLETE REFERRER DETAILS OVERLEAF:</b>	
Name of referrer:	
Agency:	
Position held:	
Date of referral:	
Contact telephone number:	

Name:..... (referrer)

Signed .....

Date: .....

*Once completed please post or email to CME Officer*

Post: Cooper Centre, Beech Grove, South Bank. TS6 6SU

Email: [cme@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](mailto:cme@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk)

### OFFICE USE ONLY

Date referral received:	
Date referral recorded on CME register:	
Date acknowledgment sent to referrer:	