



Shapla Primary School

Attendance Policy

September 2017

Approved Date:

Review Date:

Signed
(Chair of Governors)

General

Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive appropriate, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996). By choosing to send your child to school, you have a legal responsibility to make sure she/he attends on a regular basis. The school expects all students to have a 100% attendance record unless there are extenuating circumstances; poor attendance is defined as missing more than 14 sessions (7 days) over the course of an academic year and parents / Guardians of students with persistent absence risk legal action by the Local Authority if there is no legitimate explanation or medical evidence for their child's absence.

Taking the Register

In accordance with the **Education Act 1996 (s434)** and the **Pupil Registration Regulations 1995** the school takes a register twice a day.

The school register is taken at 9.00a.m. and 1.15p.m. If your child is not present when the register is taken your child will be marked absent and a note must be given when your child returns explaining the absence.

If your child is late they must report to the school office and they will receive a late mark. If your child is persistently late a letter will be sent home and a referral will be made to the Attendance and Welfare Advisor.

Aim

The school is committed to encouraging all pupils to attend school regularly, and on time, emphasising the importance of the correlation between attendance and attainment. The school works with parents, pupils, AWA and staff to secure this aim. Attendance is checked daily by the School Office Manager, and weekly by the Headteacher. Any issues are highlighted and appropriate action taken by the School Office Manager, the Headteacher or AWA.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;
- receive reports from the Head;
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Head's report; and
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is provided to the parents.

The Headteacher will:

- set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target-setting process;
- monitor progress; and
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school.
- determine whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made;
- notify parents as appropriate that if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the LA over persistent absentees ;
- present an annual report with statistics to the governing body.
- oversee the attendance arrangements;
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence;

Class Teachers will:

- ensure that students are registered accurately;
- ensure that all student absences are noted and absence notes received / requested from parents;
- follow up cases of unauthorised absence or unacceptable notes;

Parents are required to:

- Inform the school of their child's absence on the first day of non-attendance by telephone and complete an absence slip on the day of return.
- Make a written request to the Headteacher for exceptional leave of absence. This is to be done on the school's official form. (Please see guidance regarding Leave of Absence).
- To ensure that the school is provided with updated and adequate contact details, including an emergency contact.

Inspection

The Headteacher will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by HMIs, registered inspectors and, for LA maintained schools, by an LA officer.

Leave of Absence (Including Holiday Leave)

Shapla Primary School adheres to the Tower Hamlets local authority policy which states that schools should not agree to holidays or leave in term time. This is because absence from school is disruptive to children's education and affects their achievement.

The "no leave in term time" policy is published in the Starting School and Moving to a Tower Hamlets Secondary School brochures to ensure that parents are aware that holidays and visits to family **must be** taken in the 13 weeks of the year when schools are closed. If you take your children out of school they could lose their school places and may never be able to return to their school. The Authority strongly advises parents not to risk this happening.

There is no right to have time off in term time. Holidays that are not agreed by schools are marked in the register as truancy and are reported to the Attendance and Welfare Service. Children aged 5 to 16 must attend school regularly by law. If they do not, parents can be prosecuted and face being fined up to £1,000 each (Section 444(1) Education Act 1996).

Exceptional Leave

Applications for exceptional leave, (such as for family emergencies) must be made directly to the Headteacher, by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides.

The Headteacher will take into account:

- The age of the child;
- The time of the year proposed;
- The number of school days the student is expected to miss;
- The student's attendance record;
- The reason for the request for leave;
- Parental wishes.
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Should an application be approved, The Headteacher will only agree to 10 school days in any school year in exceptional circumstances.

Authorised Absence

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration, however the school would ask parents to book weekend and after school appointments if possible and this is especially important if several appointments are required. Absence for this reason will constitute authorised absence.

If the student leaves for an appointment after registering an appointment card must be shown to the school office.

Religious Observance

The Headteacher will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with the Head of Year and the parents. The school requests that parents inform the school in advance of any absence due to religious observance as dates are provided to the school as guidance by the LA.

School Travel Support

A student will not have failed to attend regularly if the parent can prove that the school is not within walking distance (defined as three miles for children over 8), in each case measured by the nearest available route, and where the LA has not made suitable arrangements for:

- Transport;
- Boarding; and
- changing to another school nearer to the home.

The council will provide assistance with the home to school journey where it is decided that it is necessary for eligible children of compulsory school age.

Taking a Pupil off the Register

The Head of School will authorise the taking of a student's name off the register in accordance with the current guidance issued by the LA.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will review the working of the policy with the Leadership Group and make at least annual reports to the governing body.

Appendix

1- The register must record the following:

- Whether the pupil is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- a) one taking place off the school premises;
- b) approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Head;
- c) supervised by a person approved by the governing body or Head;
- d) of an educational nature, educational visits.

- When a pupil of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence; and

Data Protection

The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the **Data Protection Act 1998**.