



Attendance Policy

Date: September 2017

Next review date: September 2018

Approved by the Full Governing Body 11.9.17

Signed: _____ (Chair of Governors)

Signed _____ (Executive Headteacher)

Vision

East Hoathly Church of England Primary School aims to create a happy Christian community school, based upon the love of God and one's neighbour where every child is provided with a toolkit for life-long learning through high quality teaching. They will have a love of learning with high standards of achievement, fostered through traits of resilience, respect for all, equality and inclusion.

Chiddingly Primary School aims to create a happy community school, where every child is provided with a toolkit for life-long learning through high quality teaching. They will have a love of learning with high standards of achievement, fostered through traits of resilience, respect for all, equality and inclusion.

Equal Opportunities

At Pioneer Federation we believe that all children, regardless of first language, disability, race, gender, cultural or socio-economic background, should receive equal access to the full school curriculum.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Pioneer Federation by

- ❖ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ❖ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.



DFE Guidance on
School Attendance



guidance around
MOD absences from s

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, covering up their absence or to giving in to pressure to excuse them from attending should be avoided. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- ❖ ***parents 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***

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service from the Local Authority. The Practitioner will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use Legal Interventions on parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school has the following standard procedures for registration:

- Registration time is from 8:50 until 9:00am, with registers closing at 9:30am
- Any child arriving during the registration window is on time.
- Any child arriving between the end of the registration window and the registers closing will be marked as late.
- Any child arriving after the closure of the registers will be marked as absent. The authorisation of such absences will follow the regular criteria.
- Afternoon registration is at 1:15pm.
- Early pick up of children is not authorised, unless for certain medical appointments (not all, please see below for criteria)
- Late pick up of children after school will be monitored and if necessary referred through safeguarding procedures.
- New sign off sheets for early and late pick up are to be used each day so parents cannot see how many there are each day, to reinforce the message that this practice by parents/carers is not acceptable.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Sickness absence should be reported to the school office absence line before 9.30am on the first day of absence and follow up calls made to keep the school informed if the absence is longer than one day.
- Planned absence during term time that is not medical should be requested in writing using the school form¹ and parent should be issued with the "Request for leave of absence in term time" leaflet issued by ESCC.
- GP and dental appointments should be made out of school hours unless it is an emergency in which case the child may well not attend school that day

¹ "Penalty Notices: Guidance for Schools & Academies" – ESCC A1

for that reason.

- Hospital appointments which are arranged should be arranged for out of school hours or for the afternoons where possible.
- Hospital appointments which are given (e.g. for certain clinics which only run at given times) parents should request an appointment that will enable their child to be in school for as much of the day as possible. All children should be in school for the first part of the morning wherever possible.
- Private or alternative health care appointments will not be allowed (authorised) in school hours unless supported by a GP letter and evidence that the practitioner only provides services in school hours.
- A pro forma letter² to clinics and health services from school outlining our policy and requesting appointments at certain times can be obtained from the school office by parents to help them in making suitable appointments.

It is not usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:
Pioneer Federation has adopted an acceptable rate of attendance as 96%, with a target of 97.5%. This will be monitored in the following ways:

Before starting our school:

- Parents are made aware at prospective parents' events, open days and home visits that the school take attendance seriously and about our expectations.
- Parents will also be made aware that by sending their child to school before they are 5, they are obliged to follow the policies of the school which includes not taking children on holiday in term time.

Absence & lateness from R-Y6:

- Administrative staff at each site will phone all families of absent children daily at 9.30am if there has been no information received as to where the child is.
- Admin staff will send letters³ to any family weekly where children have been late twice or more in that week.
- Admin staff will send letters⁴ to any family fortnightly where children have a punctuality rate of <85% for that fortnight.
- Admin staff will publish the weekly attendance and punctuality figure for each class on both the website and in the weekly newsletter using a colour coded "traffic light" system: 100% - gold; 96.5-99.9% green; 95-96.4% - amber; <94.9% - red.
- Reports⁵ will be given to Deputy Head & Exec Head by admin staff fortnightly for each class and will show:
 - Attendance % for that class
 - Children with less than 95% attendance and their individual %
 - Punctuality % for that class
 - Children with less than 90% punctuality and their individual %

² Appendix 1: letter for medical practitioners

³ Appendix 2: model letters – lateness

⁴ "Penalty Notices: Guidance for Schools & Academies" – ESCC B1

⁵ Appendix 3: model termly report to SLT

- Senior Leaders will employ the ESBAS flow chart⁶ for any children highlighted in the report.
- In addition, attendance and punctuality rates will be reported to governors at every Full Governing Body meeting, and the “Disproportionality relating to Persistent Absence in school”⁷ will be scrutinised to identify any vulnerable groups.
- All parents will receive a termly letter informing them of their child’s current attendance and will awarded a colour coded indication of the %, 100% - gold; 96.5-99.9% green; 94-96.4% - amber; 93.9% - 90% red, < 90% black.
- Parents of children who are displaying persistent absences which are not for valid reasons (see above) and are not showing signs of improvement will be asked to attend the Governor’s Attendance Board where they will explain the reasons for absence to members of the Governing Body.

In cases where there are concerns over absence, this will be communicated to parents in the following ways

1. Communication with class teacher, including discussions on impact on learning and progress.
2. Meeting with SENCO and class teacher
3. Meeting with Deputy Head
4. Meeting with Executive Head
5. Involvement of ESBAS (East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Service at the Local Authority)

Good levels of attendance and punctuality will be encouraged through the following:

- Weekly praise in the school newsletter and on the website for classes with excellent attendance (over 96.5%)
- Weekly attendance trophy awarded to the class with the highest attendance
- Termly certificates awarded for over target attendance for that term:
 - 96.5%-97.9% bronze award
 - 98 – 99.9% silver award
 - 100% gold award
 - All children awarded a gold certificate for the term will have their name entered into a draw to win a voucher
- At the end of each school year in term 6, children who have achieved 100% attendance for the year will be awarded a £5 book voucher.
- Special awards can be given at the discretion of the SLT e.g. “much improved punctuality”.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Governing Body

- Ensuring that regular attendance figures are made to the LA and DfE
- Requesting information from the Deputy Head/Exec Head on any aspect of the school, including attendance
- Producing an annual report to parents in which they make reference to the schools attendance figures

⁶ Appendix 4: ESBAS flow chart

⁷ Appendix 5: Disproportionality relating to persistent absence in school

- Identify and attend relevant training regarding attendance matters
- Sit on the Governor's Attendance Board to discuss issues with individual families.

Deputy Head & Executive Headteacher (SLT)

- Positively promoting good attendance within the school
- Overseeing the implementation of attendance policy and procedure
- Ensuring the collection of accurate statistical data
- Developing efficient monitoring and evaluation systems
- Forming positive links with ESBAS
- Reporting to Governing Body
- Meet with parents of children causing concern.

SENCOs

- Meet with parents, alongside the class teacher, of any children who's attendance is showing concern.

Class Teachers

- Accurate recording of the daily electronic registration list
- Communicating concerns to the SENCO, Deputy Head or DSL as appropriate
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality within the class
- Maintaining positive links with parents whilst communicating concerns
- Ensuring all notes and messages received are sent to the Admin team
- Share attendance data with parents at every Parent Consultation evening.
- Instigate the first conversation with parents over attendance concerns.

Administrative staff

- Maintaining electronic registration system
- Receiving and recording telephone communication from parents.
- Assisting in the collection of data
- On and Off rolling procedures
- Dealing with casual admissions
- Maintaining pupil and staff attendance information using SMS.

ALL OF THE ABOVE SHOULD BE PRESENT IN THE JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR THESE POSTS RESPECTIVELY (and in the case of governors, in their handbook)

Summary

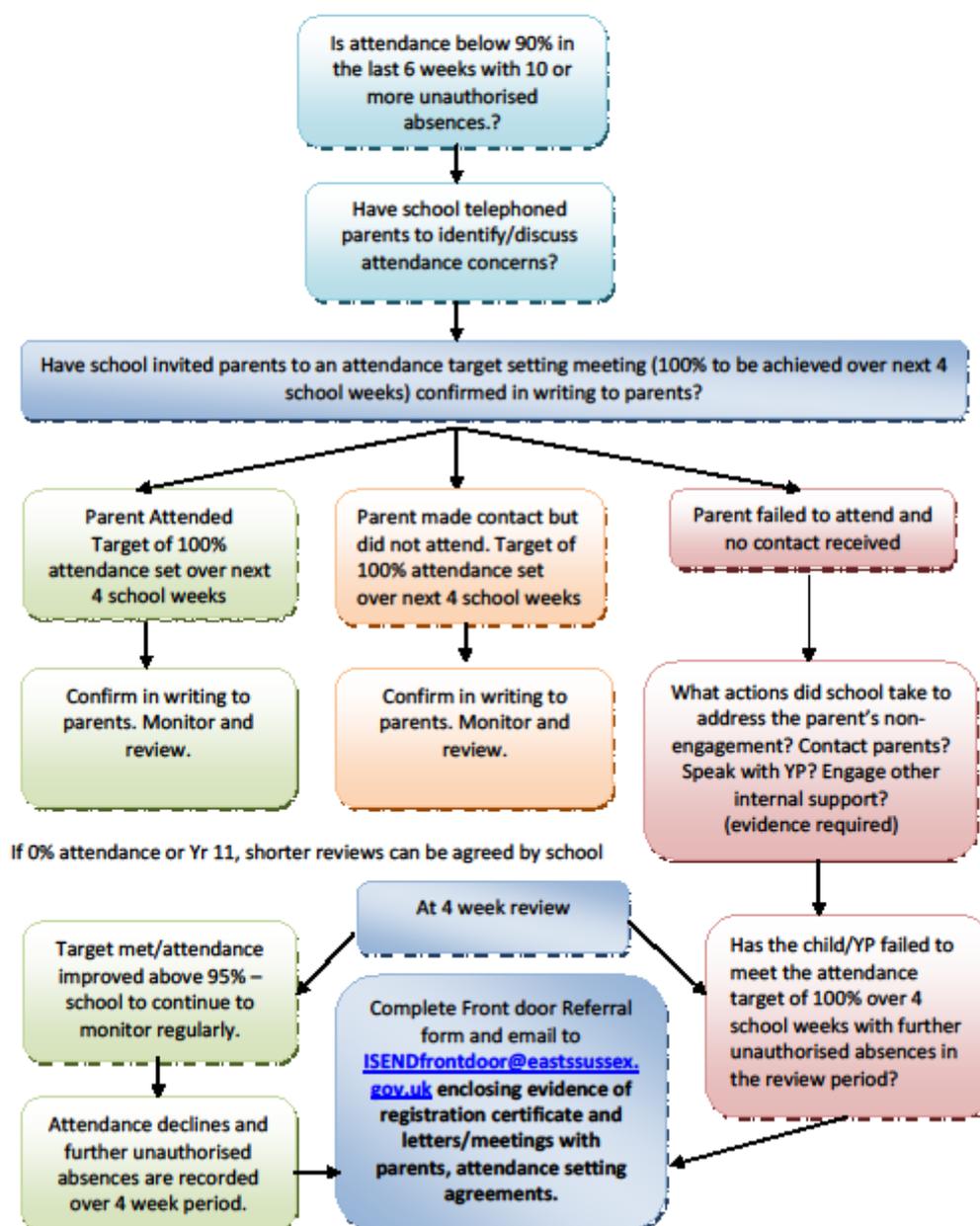
The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix 5: ESBAS flow chart

THRESHOLD FOR CORE/TRADED ATTENDANCE CASES

School are able to use units to purchase early intervention on attendance without having to have previously addressed attendance concerns with parents. Absences can be authorised/unauthorised for Traded cases. Traded referrals need to be sent to ESBAS@eastsussex.gov.uk email address and core referrals sent to ISEND Front Door as shown in the flow chart below.

ESBAS will undertake the intervention at a unit cost agreed with the Area Team Leader. Where a Family Keyworker (FKW) is involved it is an expectation that if strategies used by the FKW have not improved attendance, that this is then raised with school to consider a referral to ESBAS. **NB Where a FKW is involved, School and ESBAS must ensure that the FKW is invited to any meetings and receive copies of any correspondence/updated information.**



Appendix 7: Reference figures & Documents

1 session (half day) absence = 2%

Nationally recognised minimum standard for attendance:	96.5%
Pioneer Federation: Satisfactory level of attendance:	96-96.4%
Achieving target level of attendance:	96.5 – 97.5%
Good level of attendance:	97.5 – 99.9%
Excellent level of attendance:	100%

“Improving attendance at school” by Charlie Taylor (expert adviser on behaviour)