



Building a future for young people

## **Attendance policy**

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## Aims

At Meadows School we demand the highest level of attendance from all our students so they may develop their full potential during their time at school. It is our aim to maintain a culture of excellent attendance and punctuality. Missing out on education has a significant effect on pupils' life opportunities. Everyone associated with the school – students, parents, care staff, managers, teachers and external agencies must do everything in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality maintain an integral part of the school's work.

## Duties and Responsibilities

### **Welfare and Attendance Team (WAT)**

The WAT team is a governing team membership that is chaired by a member of the school governing body (Safeguarding Lead). The remaining WAT members are Senior Management members from Meadows Care Ltd who have overall responsibility for the homes that pupils live in. The Deputy Headteacher/SENCO reports to the WAT team the current attendance for the previous half term. The WAT team:

- Monitor the attendance of all pupils at Meadows Care Ltd.
- Liaise with Meadows school to instigate attendance interventions in the home and school.
- Work with the Registered Managers and parents to ensure that all homes follow guidelines in ensuring their young people attend school.
- Ensure that attendance issues are part of the CPD of Registered Managers and their staff.

### **Headteacher**

- Oversee, review and monitor whole school attendance and punctuality, initiating whole school policies as required. This will be achieved by liaison with the Welfare and Attendance Team and other relevant members of the Pastoral, Inclusion and Learning Support Teams.
- Present an attendance report at Governors meetings
- Support the Behaviour Team, teaching staff and corporate parents in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Report to the Welfare and Attendance team on attendance. Oversee and monitor attendance and punctuality
- Liaise with teachers and staff and highlight problems that require action if a pupils attendance falls below 95%
- Liaise with Headteacher and SENCO where there are concerns about individual students or forms.
- Refer to Headteacher if a pupil's attendance falls below 90%

- Meet regularly with the house managers and RSW's to sustain good communication and identify and intervene with individual students who may be at risk of not attending school.
- Act on daily information from staff concerning student absences or habitual lateness.
- Inform house managers of any students whose attendance and/or punctuality are a cause for concern by following the school's attendance and monitoring procedure.
- Intervene early to arrange and attend meetings with house managers and relevant staff where there is the potential for attendance issues.
- Promote good attendance through talk time and updating of school environment.

### **Education Quality Manager**

- Encourage all students in their form to maintain excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Record achievement for students with 100% weekly attendance.
- Keep an overview of students' attendance; follow up unexplained absences and check patterns of absence and poor punctuality by monitoring Behaviour For Learning (BFL) data.
- Liaise with the Deputy Headteacher and SENCO to pass on concerns about individual students.

### **Subject Teachers**

- Complete attendance and behaviour data in each lesson. (Using the school ClassDojo app)
- Record or pass on attendance to Attendance Officer by required time, twice a day. Compile all attendance data and information for relevant staff.
- Contact with carers on the first day of absence for all students where the reason for absence is unknown.
- Contact carers should any student leave the site without permission.
- Work closely with teachers, SLT and RSW's to monitor students who present concerns.
- Produce attendance certificates, letter and vouchers to reward 100% attendance every half term.

### **Student registration requirements**

There are eight broad classifications in attendance registers:

**\ Present** – the student is on the premises at the time of registration or in a LAC or PEP review.

**V Approved Educational Activity** – the student is engaged in an approved, supervised activity off site, for example field trip, educational visit, sporting activity.

**C Authorised Absence** – an absence authorised by the school which includes, social worker visit, Court appearances, Police and YOT appointments, bereavement or other circumstances where the school deems attendance to be inappropriate. There is no entitlement for students to be guaranteed leave of absence for holidays with carers during term time. A decision will be made at the Headteacher’s discretion regarding authorising absence in ‘exceptional’ circumstances.

**O Unauthorised Absence** – an absence where the student does not have good cause to be missing from school. Unauthorised absence can be defined in the following ways:

Truancy – this is action by students who fail to attend school when they should. It also includes action by carers who initiate unauthorised absence by students or who collude with it. Shopping trips, day trips or absence to look after someone else would all constitute examples of unauthorised absence.

**S Study Leave** – Authorised by SLT to year 11 students on an individual basis.

**L Late** – L will be placed in the absence mark in the register for any students who arrives after registration closes.

**M Medical** – This includes CAMHS, dentist, doctors or hospital appointments.

**B Educated off site** – ACE, SMS, Alternative Providers and ARC

**I Illness** – Illness authorised by care staff

**P Sporting Activity** - Gym and Outdoor Sporting activities

The school will aim to highlight and resolve any difficulties regarding a student’s attendance as early as possible, using our rigorous monitoring and intervention procedures and pastoral support programmes to help solve any problems.

## **Attendance Procedures**

### **Registration**

- Registers must be taken promptly at the start of the school day by the teacher or exams officer. Houses are contacted before the start of the school day and any concerns discussed. If a student is refusing to come to school then this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and the home will be guided to introduce proactive strategies to encourage attendance, in line with the homes attendance procedures.
- Staff must complete and ad hoc trips form and file with the pastoral manager if they are taking students off site to complete the lesson.
- Staff must inform colleagues of any students taking part in events in school that require students to be off timetable.

## **Outstanding Absences**

Any outstanding or unexplained absence will be followed up by the Administration Support officer or Exams Officer via email with RSW's. Until contact is made, absence will remain Not known (N)

## **Exit/Entry to School During the Day**

Students who need to leave during the school day must bring a letter from home and/or an appointment card. Students should bring the note from home to the administration support officer and sign in and out as appropriate. We would encourage all appointments to be made after 3.00pm, so as not to impact on the students learning.

## **Late arrivals (after 9.30)**

Students who arrive at school once registration has closed will be supported into their lessons to ensure they settle into class without disturbing others.

**All these procedures are very important as in the event of a fire drill it is vital there is an accurate record of who is on the school site at that time. It is equally important that all Meadows School staff sign in and out at reception.**

## **Attendance Concerns**

- The Behaviour Team meet regularly to discuss attendance and punctuality concerns. Key teachers track the attendance their students. The attendance procedures are built around early intervention and constant communication with carers in order to maximise and maintain good attendance.

**Holiday Absence** –Meadows School believes students should not miss school for this reason as it is detrimental to a child's education. There is a common misconception that any child is allowed to take 10 days holiday per year. This is not true. From September 2013, government guidelines advise that **no absence should be authorised** in advance except when due to 'exceptional circumstances. Bereavement and life-threatening illness are considered to be exceptional circumstances

## **Rewards and Incentives**

Good attendance is acknowledged in form tutor periods, talk time, celebration days and at awards events. Attendance is monitored weekly and students achieving above year group targets are recognised. The school's rewards system recognises weekly and half-termly 100% attendance (with achievement points, vouchers, and 100% enrichment activities) and

encourages students to monitor their own attendance and punctuality. Letters and/or certificates are issued each half term to students achieving 100% attendance. We are also keen to acknowledge the support of carers in working with us to maximise outcomes for our young people.

100% - 95% - Good.

95% - 90% - Incentives put in place by school and home

90% and below – Refer to WAT team.

### **Attendance Guidance for RSW's and Managers**

#### **Raise your child's attendance - Raise their chances!**

At Meadows School excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student. Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes in attendance. Evidence shows that students who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially. We ask for support from carers to:

- Ensure that their children are present at every opportunity.
- Arrive on time.
- Adhere to the school rules.
- Avoid allowing children to stay at home unnecessarily.
- Avoid taking them out of school without authorisation.

We monitor attendance closely and will follow up unexplained absence with carers, by telephone or in person. The Department for Education's threshold at which a student is defined as 'persistently absent' is 15% (down from 20% previously). Where a student's attendance record reaches a concerning level, the WAT team will contact you to discuss ways in which the school can support you and your young person.

The school attendance target of 95% is the minimum that we expect for all students. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive impact on attainment and progress.

### **Reporting Absence**

#### **What to do if your young person is ill:**

If your YP is too ill to attend school, carers should contact Administration Support officer as soon as possible.

#### ***Telephone on 01706 515140***

Please give your young person's name and the reason for the absence, and how long you expect the absence to last. We ask that you contact us each day that your young person is absent unless you have given us an indication of how long the absence will last. Please can

you also send a follow up email for our records. On your yp's return following an absence, we request that carers write a brief note explaining the absence. The student should hand the note into Becky on their return.

### **What to do if your young person has an appointment:**

We ask that, where possible, you make routine medical and other appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, we require notification in advance. Please telephone, email or provide a note from home or appointment letter/card to confirm the appointment. In most cases, your child should attend school before the appointment and return to the school afterwards wherever possible. Students should bring a note from home to Becky when it is time for them to sign out and sign back in on their return.

### **Punctuality**

All students are expected to arrive to school on time and be ready and punctual to lessons. This is a minimum expectation. Students should arrive for 9.00am. Students are expected to be in registration by 9.15am ready to start learning. Any student arriving late must sign in. After 9.30am, students will be marked as late. We would be grateful for your support in ensuring that your yp arrives on time.

### **Holidays in term time**

The Government strongly urges carers to avoid taking their children out of school for holidays as this type of absence is detrimental to a child's education.

There is a common misconception that any child is allowed to take 10 days holiday per year. This is not true. Parents are entitled to request leave of absence from the school. The Headteacher has the discretion to allow up to 10 days in any academic year for the purpose of a holiday only where there are **special circumstances**. Other factors will be taken into account, such as:

- The time of year the child will be absent (no requests will be granted at the start of a new academic year, during exam time), or for any student in Y11
- The attendance record of the student
- The number of previous requests for holidays

Any request should be made well in writing. We will consider all requests individually, **although holidays will only be authorised in the most exceptional circumstances.**

### **Leave of absence for other reasons**

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as shopping for uniform, birthdays, day trips, etc. If carers wish their yp to be absent for other reasons, such as compassionate leave,

special family events, or to participate in sporting or musical competitions etc, application should be made in writing, in advance where possible, or by telephone/email to the Headteacher.

## Appendix 1

<b><u>Attendance Monitoring and Intervention Procedures</u></b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Stage</b>
A RAG rated spread sheet will be sent weekly to Form Tutors (FT) detailing weekly and annual attendance to date.	Attendance Officer	
Attendance will be discussed by FT and students will record their attendance in planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by FT should be passed immediately to Student Managers (SM).	Form Tutor	
Contact will be made with parents through the school's Any Comms system on the first day of absence for any student absence not reported. Second day N codes will be sent to SM daily by the Attendance Officer. SM should contact home by telephone. Any N codes not established after a week will be recorded as unauthorised absence.	Attendance Officer Student Manager	
<b>Student Attendance below 95%</b> SM will speak to students in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how school can help to improve their attendance. SM will make a phone call home if applicable	Student Manager	
<b>Student Attendance below 93%</b> A letter will be sent home raising concerns that attendance has fallen below the school target of 94.5%. The letter will also have attached a leaflet outlining how parents can work with school and their child to help improve attendance.	Student Manager	
<b>Student Attendance below 90%</b> A letter will be sent home explaining that a student's absence is now being monitored. SM will contact parents by telephone to discuss the child's attendance to offer support to address any issues. The SM will monitor attendance for 2 weeks. If attendance has not risen, then parents will be required to attend a meeting in school with their child's SM. If parents are unwilling to co-operate, or genuinely unable to attend, the SM needs to make a referral to the Student Manager – Individual Needs (SMIN) who will then carry out a home visit.	Student Manager SMIN	
If attendance has not improved within the 2 week monitoring period (likely to be close to 85% or below), or if attendance has fallen rapidly, parents will be invited to either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A school attendance meeting with the SM/PL, EWO and PSA if appropriate</li> <li>- A medical action planning meeting with the School Nurse, SENCO, SM and EWO (this is in the event that the medical needs protocol has not already been initiated)</li> </ul> Provision will be discussed and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two week period.	SM EWO School Nurse SENCO	
After the two week purple monitoring period, if targets are met a letter will be sent home from the leadership team to congratulate the student and the family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until attendance stabilises	SLT	



If targets are not met, the SM will make a referral to the EWO	SM	
Education Welfare protocol will be followed. A parental contract will be drawn up and followed 4 week monitoring period No improvements – final written warning Further 4 weeks – no improvement – fixed penalty notice issued	EWO	