

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Commitment to Attendance**

The staff of Glebelands School are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, students, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and all students should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

### **Expectations**

#### **Students will:**

- Attend school 100% of the time unless absence is authorised by the Headteacher
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their form tutor/class teacher or Head of Achievement, any problems that deter them from attending school.

#### **Parents/carers/persons that have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:**

- Contact the school before 8:45am for each day their child is absent from school clearly explaining the reason for absence
- Try and make appointments outside of school hours (if a student needs to leave the school site during school hours they must bring with them a note from home or an appointment card/letter)
- Provide medical evidence for repeated absence due to illness
- Contact the school promptly to discuss any issues affecting their child returning to school
- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in regards to school attendance
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day
- Communicate with the school their child is reluctant to attend. It is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse

#### **Glebelands School will: (See Appendix 1 for roles and responsibilities)**

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all students categorising absence correctly
- Contact parents as soon as possible when a student fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Raise all unexplained absences with parents by phone or letter
- Ensure voice mail messages for student absence and Truancy Call warning are processed promptly each day.
- Inform the Head of Achievement if: the reason provided for absence is unsatisfactory or requires further investigation; there is unexplained or extended absence; a pattern of absence is observed, punctuality is causing a problem.
- Make initial enquiries of parents/carers of students who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the EA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance. This may be by phone, letter, or requesting a face to face meeting
- Consider inviting parents to an attendance panel meeting if their child's attendance falls below 95% to discuss any additional support that could be put in place
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Officer
- Record absences as either authorised or unauthorised. Where the expectation of an absence is deemed as unsatisfactory the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

## **Attendance**

Glebelands School encourages 100% attendance in the following ways:

- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration
- By publishing and displaying attendance statistics
- By requiring students to regularly record their own attendance and punctuality
- By celebrating good and improved attendance

### **The Education Welfare Officer**

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) meets weekly with the Heads of Achievement and the Deputy Headteacher responsible for attendance and monitors attendance. The EWO will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence. If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school then the school will make a referral to Education Welfare. The EWO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the EWO, under the direction of the Headteacher, will use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution. Parents may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent from the school and will give impartial advice. The contact details are available from the school office or local authority.

### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA)**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is considerably damaging a child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. Parents will be notified by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and be invited to a meeting where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified. The Headteacher may issue a Penalty Notice to parent/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officers. Before a Penalty Notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

### **Exceptional Leave of Absence**

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state that a Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. Children should not be taken out of school for unauthorised leave of absence during term time. If a leave of absence in term time is unavoidable, an application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances form must be completed prior to the absence. This can be obtained from the school office. The Headteacher will then decide whether or not to authorise the absences. Should absence be taken without the Headteacher's authorisation the case will be referred to Education Welfare and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

### **Categorisation of Absence**

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

#### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason by the Headteacher. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

- Excessive illness without medical evidence.
- Truancy during the school day
- Children who arrive after the closure of registration
- Day trips that have not been authorised by the Headteacher

## 2. Authorised absence

Students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

## 3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

## Penalty Notices

A Penalty Notice can be issued by the Headteacher as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount. Penalty notices are issued per parent per child. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution in the Magistrates court

### **Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued**

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 continuous sessions (5 days continuous) or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the Headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

*With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.*

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both

### **Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions**

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be

made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

### **Registers**

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. We choose to keep an attendance register for every period of the school day to ensure the safeguarding of our students.

### **Registration & Lateness**

The school day begins at 8:45am and we expect students to be in their tutor rooms at that time. The morning register will take place at 8:45am and students will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. Any student arriving after this time should sign in at student services. Any student arriving after 9:30am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will be taken between 12:35pm – 12:55pm for Year 7 & 8 students and 1:15pm- 1:35pm for Year 9-11 students

### **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform Glebelands School staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from Glebelands School roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the student will be leaving this school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if known.

The student's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Education welfare.

Date of approval	9/10/2017
Date of review	September 2018

## **Appendix 1 – Roles & Responsibilities**

### **All staff are expected to:**

- Encourage good attendance and punctuality.

### **Subject teachers are responsible for:**

- Keeping a register of attendance for each lesson and raise attendance concerns with their Head of Department.

### **Form tutors:**

- Provide pastoral support to address attendance issues.

### **Heads of Achievement:**

- Regularly meet with Education Welfare to identify and action any attendance concerns.
- Work with families to resolve attendance issues.

### **Attendance Officer:**

- Will ensure morning and afternoon registers are taken and are up to date during periods 1 and 5.
- Contacts parents and requests reasons for absence.
- Collates daily attendance records and, together with the attendance lead, puts in place agreed procedures to monitor and respond to poor attendance and punctuality.

### **Attendance Lead (Deputy Headteacher):**

- Monitors and reviews the attendance policy on an annual basis.
- Monitors and reviews the attendance procedures and works with the attendance office and Education Welfare to ensure reasons for absence are identified and interventions are put in place.
- Identifies and monitors attendance of PA students.

### **Headteacher:**

- Promotes the attendance policy within the school and ensures that it is implemented effectively.