

THE THOMAS AVELING SCHOOL

POLICY

for

ATTENDANCE

Policy: June 2003
Ratified by Governing Body
Reviewed: June 2005 (GNY)
Reviewed September 2007 – GNY
Reviewed July 2008 – GNY
Reviewed September 2009 – GNY
Reviewed July 2010 – GNY
Reviewed January 2012 – GNY
Ratified by FGB March 2012
Reviewed April 2013 – GNY
Reviewed June 2015 – GNY
Reviewed September 2017 – JHO/GNY (in line with EA policy and practice)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- The aim of the Attendance Policy is to reflect embedded good practice that actively supports excellent attendance and punctuality whilst seeking to improve and celebrate the attendance and punctuality of all students.
- The policy entails a clear system of sanctions and rewards supported and overseen by the House Directors of Learning, (DOLs) Assistant Directors of Learning (ADOLs) and an overarching Children's Team, that includes The Children's Team Leader, the Student Services Manager (SSM) & a Home School Support Worker (HSSW). Additionally, all Houses have linked Deputy Headteachers and there is ongoing support from the LA Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP) and The Governing Body.
- Poor attendance and punctuality disrupts and impedes learning for all students and learning is at the forefront of decisions made and action taken.
- Two form groups with designated staff support vulnerable attendance: a targeted cross House Tutor Group for year 7-11 (DDMS) and the X Group (as necessary) for identified Year 7s in the first weeks of secondary school.
- To support attendance all staff are expected to register students electronically lesson by lesson, reporting students who are unaccountably absent from their lessons to the House ADOL and SSM.

PUNCTUALITY.

Lateness

- Students who arrive in school after 9am report to their House ADOL.
- Form tutor notes lateness and discusses strategies to improve punctuality and sets targets.
- All DOLs run a daily Late Detention at break that all students attend if late to school.
- Students that are late again in the same week must stay for an hour detention every night on the day they are late.
- Ongoing lateness may result in a request for the student and their parents or carer to attend an Attendance Clinic.

LATE REGISTRATION

- Morning register closes in form period at 9am (or at the end of assembly). If a student arrives late to school after the register has closed, they must go straight to their Assistant Director of Learning to register. The AM Register remains 'open' until 9.15am. Students are issued with a Detention slip.
- Any student present in lessons but with no evidence of them having registered must be checked. Students failing to register will lead to parents/carers being notified and a sanction imposed by the DOL.
- Student 'registering' with their ADOL after register has closed is absent and note needed as routine if no call from parent.
- First day calls are made to Year 7 students and all vulnerable attenders at need. Text messages are sent to all parents who have not notified the absence.

ABSENCE

First/Second day of absence

- Parents are actively encouraged to phone/email the House ADOL or Student Services to explain absence.
- The SSM enters absence code used in lieu of a note from home as necessary – making for swifter returns. However, all students are encouraged to bring a note as a matter of course.

Suspected Forgery

- If a student's note seems to be suspicious – whether forged or for an inconsequential reason – perhaps following more than one occurrence - the Form Tutor instigates home contact by Tutor/ADOL/SSM as appropriate

Protracted Absence

- If student's absence may be for a week or more and medical evidence is provided work will be sent home co-ordinated by the Form Tutor/ADOL/Children's Team.
- Reintegration should be a positive part of lesson planning as highlighted by Ofsted and The Key Stage 3 Strategy. The ethos and culture of the classroom has to be such that children want to learn and returning to school is a positive step rather than a disheartening experience.
- Parents are alerted if student attendance drops below 96% /specific KS4 letter.
- Persistent absence requires medical evidence.
- HSSW/AAP intervention including home visits.
- Request to attend an Attendance Clinic comprising DOL/AAP/HSSW and other key staff as appropriate including Governors.
- In the early stages of a case referred to the AAP, it may be decided that the serving of a Penalty Notice is appropriate for cases where a parent continually fails to provide an explanation for their child's absence in accordance with the school procedures. **If absence is recorded as unauthorised in the register for at least 10 sessions in any previous six weeks, a PN will be issued.**

Unauthorised absence during term time

The Department for Education (DfE) has amended the regulations governing requests for holidays in term time. With effect from 1st September 2013, amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that "Principals MAY NOT grant any holidays or other absences during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances."

If Parents/Carers take students out of school during term time on unauthorised leave, a referral will be made to the AAP and a Penalty Notice may be issued. Penalty Notices require the recipient to pay a fine, currently £60 (per parent/carer, per child) if paid within 21 days or £120 (per parent/carer, per child) if paid within 28 days. Non-payment of these fines will result in application to Criminal Court.

PENALTY NOTICES AS EVIDENCE IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Payment of Penalty Notices discharges liability for prosecution for the offence to which the Penalty Notice relates (ss444A(2) and (4) of the Education Act 1996 as inserted by s23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003). This means that neither the fact that a Penalty Notice was issued and paid nor the pattern of unauthorised absence to which a paid notice relates can be submitted as evidence in prosecution for any subsequent offence.

In circumstances where the Penalty Notice is not paid, Medway Council may use the fact that a notice was issued and unpaid as evidence in a subsequent prosecution and the unauthorised absence for which the Penalty Notice was issued can be used as evidence in the usual way.

ATTENDANCE REWARDS

- 99% + attendance and punctuality to be rewarded by ongoing House Attendance Celebrations.
- House Points and Certificates awarded for excellent attendance.

TRUANCY

Suspected Truancy From Lessons

If students who are missing from a lesson but have been marked present previously in the school day, the SSM/ADOL and/or Reception should be informed. The student's whereabouts will then be monitored and parents/carers and DOL informed.

On return to school the truant is:

1. Seen by the DOL/Subject Leader and referred to the Form Tutor and the ADOL/DOL/Subject Leader will contact home as appropriate.
2. The student will be placed on Attendance Report.
3. The student may be placed in the Inclusion zone to monitor.
4. The Form Tutor/ADOL will then monitor closely attendance in the subsequent weeks and talk to the student if there is a problem and refer to the Children's Team Leader /Attendance Clinic as appropriate.

Students Off Site

No Key Stage 3 or 4 students without an authorised Lunch Pass are allowed off site at Break or Lunch. If they are caught doing so parents/carers are contacted by the ADOL by letters that explain the sanctions as appropriate and which can include: Break and Lunchtime Report, Community Service, inclusion in Inclusion Zone or with Tutor and in persistent cases Parental Supervision at lunchtimes off site or a fixed term exclusion. If the Lunch Pass is misused, it will be removed.

J Holdsworth/G Nyangon
September 2017