

EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE POLICY



SET SAIL FOR SUCCESS

Reviewed Spring 2014

Introduction

Our school is aware of the value of regular attendance, not only to help raise the levels of achievement, but to enable children to participate fully in the life of the school. Children with poor attendance often fall behind on their learning and find it hard to build relationships and friendships, which often lead to even poorer attendance.

We aim to reach the target of at least 97% attendance across the school. We all need to work together to achieve this.

The purpose of this policy is to remind everyone of the structures in place at Mayflower to monitor attendance and strategies to raise attendance further.

Rewarding excellent attendance

To encourage excellent attendance, the school rewards the Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 classes with best attendance certificates which is awarded weekly. The best class attendances are recorded in the weekly newsletter. A class prize is awarded half termly for the class with the best attendance. The class negotiate the prize with their class teacher, bowling and Kidspac are popular choices. These have proved very effective with both parents and children. We also hand out 100% attendance certificates throughout the year to individual children who come to school every day.

Registers

Registers are completed online at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. These are legal records and it is every teacher's responsibility to ensure they are completed accurately and up to date. The registers provide evidence of attendance and lateness and are used to provide termly and annual statistical returns. Tower Hamlets use the attendance if and when they decide to proceed with legal action against parents.

Registers are monitored fortnightly by the Attendance Welfare Advisor (AWA) from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It is important that every teacher follows the guidance in completing the class registers and follows agreed procedures.

Excellent Time Keeping

We are working hard to improve time keeping. Children arriving after 9:00 am are marked in the late book and given a red card. If they arrive to class late without a late card please send them to the office to collect one. All children can attend Breakfast Club for free every morning from 8:00 AM until 8:40 AM. They can enjoy a healthy breakfast and be on time every morning.

Persistent lateness should be referred in the same way as absences. The AWA should be involved if there are 15 lateness marks in any 5-week period. Parents who persistently arrive

late to collect their children at home time should be referred to the Headteacher or Dani, our Parent Support Partner (PSP).

We hold a Morning Management Workshop each half term to explore ways in which parents and their children can arrive at school on time. Staff can signpost children who arrive late to attend Breakfast Club.

All absences recorded with 'N' should be changed once parents inform the class teacher or office staff why their child is absent. If the class teacher knows why a child is absent they can record the absence using the relevant attendance code and record reason of absence by clicking on the icon 'notes' at the end of the child's name. The Parent Support Partner will monitor the absence on the registers and change any absence recorded as 'N' to the relevant attendance code and include reason of absence in the 'notes'.

Absence Procedures

When the register is taken a reason for absence may not be known. If a child is absent and the parents do not inform the school then the Parent Support Partner will call home. If the parents do not answer the phone then the Parent Support Partner will send a letter home requesting the parent to return the reply slip stating the reason of absence.

If anyone is not clear about the codes, please refer to the office staff or the AWA.

Unacceptable reasons for absence include:

- Going shopping
- A visit to the airport
- Needed to translate
- Birthday celebrations
- Visiting relatives
- Looking after siblings
- Waiting for deliveries, gas etc
- Long weekends
- Appointments (without evidence)

If any of these reasons are given, teachers must inform the office staff and record absence as attendance code 'O' (this means other unauthorised attendance) and include reason of absence in 'notes'.

Responsibility of Parents

If a child is away, parents are expected to inform the school. Parents can leave a message with a member of the office staff either in person or via telephone. If parents are unable to speak with a member of the office staff then they can leave a message on the absence line. Parents should give the child's name, class and the nature of the illness. A reason of "being sick" is not sufficient. A message from the child or a sibling is also not sufficient. If a child has a medical appointment an appointment card or letter should be shown to the class teacher or to the office staff. Class teachers must remind parents to make appointments after school or during lunch time so it does not affect the child's learning and attendance.

Class Teacher's Role

Class Teacher's should encourage excellent attendance as we want children to come to school everyday. If a child is not feeling well in morning or afternoon we want them to come to school for half a day rather than miss the whole day.

If a child's absence is of concern to the class teacher, then a phone call home should be made as soon as possible on the first morning. Please send a note to Dani about any

concerns. Please make sure that excellent attendance is encouraged and promoted in your class.

Supporting Good Attendance

RED Attendance below 90%

Each term, a register check identifies children with poor attendance. Sometimes these are genuine long-term illnesses, but are often children who miss odd days regularly. These families receive a letter from our PSP and their attendance will be monitored regularly. Any absence should be met with an instant phone call home as outlined above. Once every half term an Attendance Panel is held at the school and the parents of the children with the lowest percentage attendance are invited to speak with the AWA and the Parent Support Partner. If their attendance does not improve then they are targeted by our AWA for a home visit. The AWA will play a more challenging role with families and if improvements are not made, then legal action is a possibility.

Other Worries: Some children are of concern even if they don't fit the above criteria. Please inform Dani or the AWA.

AMBER 91 – 94%

Please monitor and if possible talk to parents about poor attendance.

GREEN 95 + % attendance is not causing concern

Children Off Roll

Only the Headteacher can take children off roll. If a child is known to be moving, please see the Headteacher or office staff. The child must be included on the register until we have been informed he/she has started a new school. If nothing is heard in two weeks, the child will be referred to the AWA. A similar decision is made for children who fail to return from extended leave.

Future Plans

- Attendance week (monitor the effect this has)
- Certificates/prizes to reward improving attendance
- Reward improvements of individual attendance

Leave During Term Time

Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme

The school follows Tower Hamlets guidance on leave during term time, we expect families to take leave during school holidays. **We do not give permission for leave during term time.** Any children on leave during term time will be counted as an unauthorised absence and each parent will be liable to pay a penalty notice of £60 each per child. If this is not paid within 28 days this penalty notice will then increase to £120 per parent per child. If a child misses a considerable amount of school during term time they will be taken off roll. All unauthorised absence is reported to Tower Hamlets Welfare and Attendance Team and will be contacted by the school AWA.