



**SEVENOAKS**  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

## **PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **General**

Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

Under the provisions of the **Education Act 1996 (s434)** and the **Pupil Registration Regulations 1995** the school must keep an attendance register. At the moment the school keeps manual records.

The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the **Data Protection Act 1998**.

### **Aim**

The school is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The school will work with parents and pupils to secure this aim. The other purpose of this attendance policy is to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the school.

### **Taking the Register**

Pupils of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register ALL pupils.

The register must be updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition all teaching staff must check that the pupils who should attend each lesson do so.

The register must record the following:

- Whether the pupil is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- a) one taking place off the school premises;
- b) approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Head;
- c) supervised by a person approved by the Governing Body or Headmaster;
- d) of an educational nature, including field trips and educational visits or interviews with prospective schools; and
- e) where pupils attend their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under school supervision (e.g. sick children being taught at home), or attending approved sporting activity:
  - When a pupil of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence; and
  - the nature of the approved educational activity (for a pupil of compulsory school age).

All Form registers will be closed 30 minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

## **Responsibilities**

The Governing Body will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;
- receive reports from the Headmaster;
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Headmaster's report; and
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is known by the parents.

The Headmaster will:

- monitor progress; and
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school;
- determine (in collaboration with the Deputy Head and Head of the Junior School) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made;
- notify parents as appropriate that if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the LEA over persistent absentees;
- liaise with the LEA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school.

The Deputy Head and Head of the Junior School will:

- oversee the attendance arrangements;
- work with Form Teachers to ensure the efficient running of the system;
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence;
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence;

- ensure that unaccounted for absences are followed up;
- deal with issues of inadequate registering;
- arrange appropriate training for staff;
- keep the Headmaster informed of the progress of the policy; and
- advise the Headmaster on any strategies that could be initiated or improved.

Form Teachers will:

- ensure that pupils are registered accurately;
- ensure that pupils bring absence notes;
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable notes;
- keep the Deputy Head and Head of the Junior School informed of any signs of suspected truancy; and
- inform the Deputy Head and Head of the Junior School of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.

Classroom Teachers will:

- check the attendance of pupils at their lessons; and
- inform the Form Teachers of the names of pupils who are absent without notification.

Pupils are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session);
- if possible inform the school of their absence on the first day of non-attendance;
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school; via their parents
- discuss with the Form teacher any planned absences well in advance (eg a family holiday);
- make any request for leave of absence on the school's official leave of absence form.

## **Inspection**

The Deputy Head will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by HMIs, registered inspectors.

## **Leave of Absence**

Leave can be granted by only by the Headmaster and Headmaster of the junior School. Parents will be expected to use the school's official leave of absence request form.

## **Holiday Leave**

Parents can be given leave by the school to take a child on a holiday. Formal requests must be made to the Headmaster on the school's official form.

The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides, but the form can be brought to the school by the pupil.

The Headmaster will not give leave automatically but will take into account :

- The age of the child;
- The time of the year proposed;
- The nature of the holiday;
- Parental wishes; and
- The views of the Form Teacher and Class Teachers.

If the pupil still goes on a holiday which has not been approved by the school it counts as unauthorised absence.

The School will only agree to absences of more than 10 school days in any school year in exceptional circumstances.

### **Short Term Leave**

The school can legally grant short term leave for family reasons. It is for the Headmaster to determine the reasonableness.

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence.

If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registering no absence needs to be recorded.

The school may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Headmaster will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the Deputy Head. The Headmaster may also seek advice from the LEA or appropriate agency before coming to a decision.

### **Religious Observance**

There is no legislation or regulation or DFE guidance on this matter. The Headmaster will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with the Deputy Head and Head of the Junior School and the parents.

The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

### **Taking a Pupil off the Register**

The Headmaster will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations.

**Monitoring and Review**

The Headmaster will review the working of the policy with the Senior Management Team and make at least annual reports to the governing body.

**Review date: September 2012**

**Edward Oatley**  
**Chair of Governors**

**Philip Oldroyd**  
**Headmaster**