**The Royal (Crown Aided) First School**

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**Attendance Policy**

***“Inspired to learn”***

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| Date reviewed: | Summer 2014 |
| Date ratified: | 17.05.2016 |
| Date of next review: | May 2018 |
| To be reviewed by: | Education Committee |

**Introduction**

The Royal School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. As a school we have a zero tolerance of unauthorised absence.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that children and young people attend school rests with their parents/carers. However promoting attendance and tackling absence is the responsibility of schools and agencies within the local authority. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils, their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance including e.g. newsletters and end of term reports. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a pupil’s attendance we will investigate, identify and work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

School attendance is subject to Education law and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it, the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

**School Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised.

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.

**Lateness**

Morning registration will take place at the start of school from 8.50am and closes at 9.20am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. Afternoon registration will be at 1.25pm.

In cases where, for example, the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late (L) before registers close. If they arrive after the registers close they are recorded as unauthorised (U).

When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours. An appointment card or other written confirmation must accompany medical/dental appointments.

If a child is late it has a negative impact on the child’s learning and disrupts all the children in the class.

**Absence from School:**

**First Day Absence**

Parents/carers must give a written or verbal explanation, by ringing the school office. If by 9.30am school staff receive no explanation for absence they will contact the parent.

**Third Day Absence**

If no explanation has been received a standard letter will be sent home and parents are expected to ring school that day with an explanation.

We will notify Social Services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.

**Frequent Absence**

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parent/s. The Head teacher (or nominated member of staff) will liaise with the schools allocated Education Welfare Officer to ensure necessary action is taken when incidents of poor attendance and/or punctuality are identified.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the School will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward.

**All absence from school must be explained in writing when the child returns to school.**

**The Law**

**Penalty Notices and Legal Action**

Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) 444(1A) states that;

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable;

* To his/her age, ability and aptitude.
* To any special needs he/she may have.
* Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
* Failure to do so may result in legal action taken against the parent under the above legislation.

**Leave of Absence**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states;

* Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
* Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice will be issued to each parent for each child.

**The penalty is per parent per child and will be £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 & 28 days.**

If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in writing in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides. Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to ‘exceptional circumstances’. Parent/s will be informed in writing of the head’s decision.

There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year, which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.