



# **Adelaide Primary School Attendance Policy November 2016**

## **ETHOS AND VALUES**

Adelaide Primary School is an exciting inner-city school that provides a first class educational experience to its children. We aim to ensure all our children are safe, enjoy coming to school, achieve highly and are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. To achieve this, all members of the Adelaide school community are expected to take responsibility and make a valuable contribution. Our core values of respect, equality and effort underpin all aspects of our work.

School policies are reviewed to include racial equality, accessibility, inclusion and equal opportunities for all.

What IMPACT does the policy have on the lives of pupils at Adelaide Primary School with regards to the above statement?

At Adelaide, we feel that good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, and parents/carers can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and liaise with home and other relevant agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and will be recognised as such by the school. Our attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

#### **WHY?**

- The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient fulltime education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).
- Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.
- Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:
- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.
- Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.
- Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is

not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

- There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.<sup>4</sup>
- The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

## **AIMS**

- To promote regular attendance thus offering all pupils equal access to learning
- To improve the quality of school life
- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'
- To demonstrate to pupils, parents/carers and staff that good attendance is valued by the school
- To recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement within itself
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions
- To value the individual.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Meet the Government attendance targets set for us
- Create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers
- Ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days
- This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **School**

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance

### **Parents**

- To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence.

- To work with the school to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.
- If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should: talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

## **TARGETS**

- To have an effective system of monitoring attendance
- To agree specific targets for whole school and class attendance
- To keep parents/carers, pupils and governors informed of policy and practice.

## **THE PROCESS FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

The school Admin or Well Being Officer will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss with the Head Teacher. Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

Stage 1: Verbal communication with parents outlining concerns

Stage 2: Initial letter to parents

Stage 3: Invitation to meeting in school

Stage 4: Formal proceedings towards prosecution

## **ABSENCES DURING TERM TIME**

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.*

It is the policy of Adelaide Primary School not to authorise any absence other than illness. Unauthorised absences may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.

**AS OF 1ST SEPTEMBER 2013, THE RATE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL BE £60 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £120 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 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.

There are approximately 190 school days (380 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.**

## **LATENESS**

**Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.**

- The school opens its doors at 8.45am each day and the children must be in class by 8.55am. Registers will be taken as soon as possible after that time. Children will be marked late if they arrive at school after the registers have been taken. Children who arrive after that time must come into the building via the main office, where they will be entered into the late book.
- Lateness will be closely monitored
- If the arrival at school is after the registers have closed, the pupil will receive a 'U'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M' on their return – wherever possible a pupil should attend school before an appointment and be collected from the school office and signed out
- Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school to discuss the problem.

## **SICKNESS**

- Please notify the school on each day of the absence.
- We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

## **PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School by:

Each week, the class with the highest attendance in school will be awarded £10 (£5 for second) and a trophy. At the end of each term, teachers will help their children decide how to spend the money they have earned.

Individual children with 100% attendance at the end of each term will be awarded a certificate and if they achieve 100% for the whole school year, they will be rewarded with a £10 voucher.

## **THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE**

The Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

Section 444 of the Education Act states that “if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence.”

The Education Welfare Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

A Fixed Penalty Notice when requested by a Head teacher can be issued as long as the following criteria apply:

- At least 10 sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence by the pupil during the current school term, or 20 sessions (ten school days) in the previous 4 months
- Other than in specific circumstances, the parent will receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given 15 school days to affect improvement. Within the 15 day period, further unauthorised absence will trigger the issue of a notice without warning.
- No more than two Penalty Notices will be issued per pupil per academic year.

In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority reserves the right to:

- issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence
- issue a Penalty Notice without warning

## **CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION**

Position Statement – national definition of children who are not receiving a suitable education:

“A compulsory school age child who is not on the role of a school, not placed in alternative provision by a local authority, and who is not receiving a suitable education at home” (Revised statutory guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education January 2009)

Hull City Council Children Missing from Education protocol is designed to support professionals across CYPs, partners and stakeholders in their combined efforts to safeguard children who are missing from education. Its aim is to identify the practical steps to be taken by professionals to locate and track children and young people missing from education. Please refer to the City Council’s Protocols.