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Aims

To provide clear guidelines about how the school promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance. This will ensure that all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves, and each other, and strive to attain them.

Objectives

1. to achieve 96%+ attendance rate.
 2. to ensure that the importance of full attendance at school is promoted for ALL children, regardless of circumstances and that school is taking every reasonable measure to support this.
 3. to ensure that absences are recorded appropriately as authorised or unauthorised, depending on the circumstances.
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1. to promote partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning.
 1. to involve other agencies when all possible school based supportive measures have been put in place.

The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for the following personnel:

- Pupils
- Parents
- Staff
- Governors

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Procedures for implementation

Expectation of all pupils:

- that they will attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate of 97-100%.
- that they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day

Expectation of parents:

- That they will ensure their child/ren attend school, aiming for a 97-100% attendance rate.
- That they will contact school as soon as it is reasonably practical (by 9am) whenever their child is unable to attend.
- That any absence is followed by a written explanation of why the child was absent and for what period of time if it is more than one day.
- To ensure that their child arrives in school on time and is well prepared for the school day.
- To contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To refrain from taking the child out of school for holidays, or occasional days, unless there are **significant exceptional** circumstances. This may include but is not limited to competing at a national level in events, immediate family weddings and family funerals.

Expectations of school:

- To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence/absence.
- To make early contact with parents when a child fails to attend (by 9.15am)
- To track and analyse attendance records to ensure that all groups of children are

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attending school regularly

- To refer to appropriate support agencies as required.
- To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance.
- To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted.
- To promote good attendance through end of term attendance certificates and weekly class attendance certificates.
- To treat each request for authorised absence as individual cases, using expertise/advice from other headteachers, governors or partnership agreements where relevant.

Expectation of governors:

- To monitor the effectiveness of the policy through Headteacher reports and policy reviews.
- To support the school in encouraging good attendance through role modelling.
- To communicate effectively with parents about the benefits of regular and punctual attendance through the governor newsletter.
- To work with other agencies as appropriate.

School Procedures related to attendance:

Our school day begins at 8.50am for all children. Anyone who arrives after the register has closed is late.

Registers are taken between 8.50 and 9am, then at 1pm.

Registers are completed and submitted to the office using Integris at the end of registration.

Registers will be completed using the codes identified in Appendix A.

If no information, regarding the absence of a child, has been received by 9.15am, the office will telephone the parent to check the reason for absence.

If there is no reason given for the absence or if the reason given is inadequate, this will be

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recorded as unauthorised absence.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Headteacher, following statutory requirements and the school's policy on attendance. This may also link to partnership arrangements about attendance.

Authorised Absence

- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from the parents that the child is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence and a note of confirmation on the child's return if the absence is longer than one day.
- If the child has a medical appointment with the doctor or dentist that cannot be made outside school hours, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents. Parents must request the period of absence or inform the school in advance.
- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the school procedures, then this will be an authorised absence.

An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents give a reason, if the absences are persistent. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request confirmation from the GP that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

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Unauthorised absence

Absences will not be authorised if the following occur:

- Unexplained absence.
- Absence for a shopping trip or looking after a younger child at home.
- A trip or holiday.
- Any absence that is not considered by the Headteacher to be as the result of extenuating circumstances.

Persistent lateness

If a child arrives after the register has closed, the absence will be recorded as Late, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the lateness is persistent and parents/carers fail to work with the school to address the issues, the matter may be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Officer, who will offer support. If there is still no improvement, a Penalty Fine could be issued.

Response to non attendance:

- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone. If no contact can be made, either through work or mobile numbers, the school will use the contacts list provided by parents.
- Where there has been no response, or explanation, the school will contact the parents/carers requesting information regarding the absence and log the incident.
- Where there continues to be no response to the school intervention, and the absence has persisted without explanation, the school will refer the issue to the Attendance and Engagement Officer.

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- If a child's attendance slips below 95%, the school will initially send out a letter if appropriate, expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve and the level of attendance continues to drop, the Head will invite the parents in to discuss the issue and may request the support of the Attendance and Engagement Officer if appropriate.
- In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between school and parents, with the support of the Attendance and Engagement Officer, the school will refer the matter formally to the Hub, where necessary, legal proceedings will be instigated.

Legal Proceedings

The Education Act 1996, Section 444 and the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23, gives powers to the Local Authority to initiate a range of legal procedures if parents/carers fail to ensure an appropriate education for their children. These procedures include a Penalty Fine, an Education Supervision Order, Parenting Order or prosecution which could result in a fine, unpaid work in the community and in extreme cases a term of imprisonment.

Incentives for good attendance:

- Attendance data will be checked regularly (termly) by the Governing Body to identify any issues.
- Attendance will be discussed at regular staff meetings where staff have the opportunity to express any concerns.
- Reasons for regular attendance and punctuality, and being well prepared for school will be raised in assemblies and PHSE sessions.
- Parents will receive information/reports on their child's level of attendance at Parent consultation meetings and in their annual report in July.

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Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness

- The Headteacher and Governing Body will analyse attendance data at the end of each term to identify issues and trends.
- The school will work closely with the Attendance and Engagement Officer, if required, in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the school.

Summary

Through the implementation of the Policy, we aim to achieve the following:

- A 96%+ attendance rate overall.
- A positive partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning.
- Clear and transparent procedures and expectation understood by all stakeholders.

Strategies we use for tackling attendance

Calls made to any parent whose child is not in school by 9.10am by the office; if no response calls made to all contact numbers on list provided by parents; for PP children who don't come in the HT calls the parent to ascertain why

Posters to promote 'Diamond' attendance in each class and on noticeboards

Regular reminders about attendance expectations in the newsletter and systems in place to promote attendance

An appointment with the headteacher is made for any parent who wishes to make a request for leave

No authorised absence given for holiday requests in term-time

Any attendance below 95% for individual pupils is followed up, firstly with a warning letter, then meetings between the headteacher and parent if the attendance continues to drop and, if it continues,

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involvement of HSL and possible TAF

Tracking of attendance every term and specifically for PP children, comparing attendance at six points in the year, as well as year on year

TAFs in place for any PP pupil whose attendance is poor

Changing answerphone message so that parents cannot just leave a message if their child is absent but need to speak to the office staff who, for persistent absentees, will transfer the parent to the headteacher for a discussion about why their child is not in school

Members of staff, including office manager and headteacher, going to children's houses to collect children to bring them to school if attendance is an issue

Specific arrangements have been made to ensure high attendance with specific families

Parenting contract in place where appropriate

Termly governor newsletter frequently reiterates the importance of full attendance and why

Attendance policy due to be reviewed before the 3 year point, in order to reflect the focus and actions taken to improve attendance, particularly with regard to PP attendance

New page on website entitled 'Attendance' to promote how importantly we regard attendance at Middle Barton School and the measure we take to encourage full attendance

Attendance levels and concerns flagged up on annual report to parents and at parents' evenings

- Where there are significant concerns over a pupil's behaviour we will share the strategies we use with parents; working on an active partnership to promote good behaviour.
- Early support for developing problems.
- Strategies may be recorded in an Individual Education plan or where there is a high level of concern, a Pastoral Support Plan.