WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

AIMS

Sandfield Park School and all its constituent sites are committed to providing an education for all its pupils in The Alder Centre for Education (ACE), The Hospital School at Alder Hey and Sandfield Park Special School. We realise that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly will our young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

The school recognises the clear link between attainment and attendance, and attendance and safeguarding. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a pupil is clearly unwell, staff at Sandfield Park will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. The school must receive a valid reason for absence for this to be authorised.

The school will use various rewards to promote excellent attendance (See Rewards Policy)

The whole school community including parents, carers, pupils and all school staff have a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all pupils are able to learn and feel valued members of the school community. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Registration

The school is legally required to have an attendance register twice each day at the very beginning of the day and at the start of the afternoon session. Each site has its own system of registration with prescribed codes used as outlined in staff handbooks in all settings for each student.

Please note that if pupils from Sandfield Park or ACE are taught in the Hospital School, then they are being educated off-site and coded B by their Home School for sessions attended.

Absences can be authorised in the following circumstances

 - Where leave has been granted by the school in advance for example a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion e.g. family wedding.
- where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend
-where a pupil has a medical appointment, however a parent must try to return the child to school immediately afterwards or send him or her to school beforehand.
-Where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family is controlled e.g. extreme weather conditions.
-Absence occurs on a date exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupils parents belong
-In other exceptional circumstances e.g. a family bereavemeant and for a limited period

Except in the circumstances described above absences will be unauthorised
Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- No explanation has been given by the parent or carer
- The school is not satisfied with the explanation
- The pupil is shopping during school hours
- the pupil is absent for another reasons e.g. a birthday

Where are people engaged in offsite approved educational activities, school will check his or her attendance before entering the appropriate code in the register

Systems and strategies for managing and improving people attendance

1.The collection and analysis of data
2.On a daily basis office staff will go through the registers asap and by 9:30 AM and any absences will be noted. If no explanation has been received, school will attempt to contact the parent or carer.
3.If the child returned to school with no explanation of its absence from the parent carer, a letter will be sent to them requesting this information
4.If a pattern of concern is developing, the School will speak to the parent carer about their child's pattern of attendance. If there is no significant improvement the Headteacher will contact the parent carers and invite them to school to discuss attendance.

Parents and carers will be expected to :
-notify the school by telephone on the first day of absence
-attend parent carers meetings and consultations taking an interest in the Child's work activities and   contact the school without delay if they concerned about any aspect of the child's school life
- try and make sure the child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning

Regular school attendance is a necessary contributor to ensuring positive outcomes for all children, these include the best way to safeguard children especially attending school regularly. Good school attendance supports engagement in further education employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling lifestyle

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

The Alder School for Education (ACE)

Please note the attendance procedures for ACE that run alongside this policy.

The nature of the pupils at ACE and the fact that they remain single registered with their mainstream school. This means that attendance is a key priority and thus our procedures must be very clear.

When a child is referred to ACE for education support they become become guest pupils on Sandfield Park School's SIMS. Present marks are recorded by ACE on a internal register whilst B code is recorded by their Home School. Both ACE and Home school also record absence codes as appropriate. The nature of the provision at ACE means that procedures for recording attendance **MUST** be precise and accurate. These are as follows:

Both the referring school and parents will receive a copy of the child's timetable. The timetable is personalised to deliver an education that is appropriate to their health needs.

Therefore it is important that parents/guardians accept responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child during times when they are not expected to attend a lesson.

This forms an agreement between all parties as outlined in the procedures.

Specific Procedures also include the following:

1. Parent must contact ACE to inform of absence 1 hour before lesson is due to start. A call by the child or a call to taxi driver is not sufficient.

2. ACE to contact parent on first day of absence (pm) if no call has been received. If parent does not answer a message to be left to contact ACE asap.

3. If parent does not contact ACE the day following absence, a letter to be sent home, even if pupil consequently attends.

4. If no contact received from parent by 3rd day after absence and pupil has not attended, ACE to contact school/EWO. This will be sooner for more vulnerable children.

5. If parent does not contact ACE to inform of absence on more than 2 occasions the taxi contract will be cancelled. Parent must make contact with ACE in order to reinstate taxi or make own transport arrangements.

6. Transport by taxi is arranged by ACE to collect a child from the home address and to return to the home address. An adult must be at home when the child returns to ensure their safety. If this is not possible then the child must be provided with a key to the home. Written permission for a child to be dropped off at home without an adult present must be received by ACE.

7. If on occasion parents require their child to be collected or returned to an alternative address (within Liverpool) then prior notice needs to be given to ACE by the parent. This is to ensure we follow safeguarding procedures.

8. A taxi driver is not allowed to transport a child to a different address unless they have been informed of this by ACE.

9. If this is not convenient for parents then they must make their own transport arrangements and the taxi provision will be withdrawn.

10. A child may be discharged if there is a lack of engagement/attendance or if behaviours are having a detrimental effect on other pupils and their health.

Key attendance strategies

As a whole school we will be using the following strategies promoted by Liverpool LA to ensure that the attendance of students is as high as it possibly can be.

- Raise everyone's expectations about what can be achieved. Ensure attendance is discussed as often as possible and is linked to the outcomes for students.
- Create a clear attendance action plan linked to the school development plan.
- Clearly define attendance roles and responsibilities for all staff and families, ensuring improving attendance is everybody's business. In particular ensure there is clarity between the roles of the Attendance lead, Attendance Admin Officer and any EWO used as support.
- Clarify daily, weekly and monthly attendance routines including the scrutiny of data by classteacher through to the governors.
- Clarify attendance procedures to ensure records of attendance interventions are clearly recorded for each child, and in particular when children are visibly seen, spoken to and noted to be safe and well. Consider how first day response is followed up.
- Evaluate your first-day response activity and how attendance is then followed up on subsequent days. Consider attendance escalation procedures.
- Consider how individuals' attendance, class and whole school attendance is discussed regularly.
- Ensure that the progress against school and cohort attendance targets are discussed at all meetings and that governors and school leaders evaluate the impact of attendance strategies.
- remove barriers to them attending well. Consider how students are supported once they return to school.
- Create further opportunities to celebrate attendance improvements in displays around school and activities including assemblies and form/tutor time. Embed attendance in school reports, newsletters and all key communications.
- Identify your PA cohort and at risk of PA and monitor their attendance
- Consider attendance-type contracts for those with the poorest attendance and individual attendance plans for all PAs
- Discuss with students what rewards are needed to promote positive attendance.

Once you have refined your systems and activity consider developing questions to test them out. Refining and embedding activity is the key to delivering improvements. Questions to consider:

1. The school has defined attendance roles and responsibilities for key staff. How well are these roles understood and is there evidence to support that the activity associated with each of the roles is being undertaken?

2. The school has improved the signage and displays related to attendance. Are these sufficiently referred to by staff and students? Are they kept regularly up-to-date? Is there any more that can be done to promote improved attendance?

3. The school has developed its analysis of attendance data to include all groups of students and specific attendance codes. Is this done on a half-termly basis and shared with

governors? Is the analysis supporting the school to refine its interventions and demonstrate clear improvements?

4. How successful is the rewards programme in promoting improvements in attendance? Do students tell you it motivates them? Are families aware?

5. Are students and parents clear about the child's current attendance and target for improvement? How is this communicated to them? Are letters sent home on a regular basis? How is attendance discussed with all students during structured lesson time? How is attendance discussed with the PA cohort and those at risk of becoming PA?

6. How effective is the school at recording and monitoring the impact of attendance interventions for the cohort identified as needing additional support? How is the analysis drawn upon to refocus the school's efforts for individual students

7. Are parents clear about the school's attendance escalation procedures? Is there evidence that students are being managed at different stages ?

8. Has the attendance PA/at risk of PA cohort been divided amongst senior staff, other key staff and the EWO so that each has a clear cohort to work with?

9. Does the school continue to ensure there is safeguarding oversight of attendance data, examining patterns of unauthorised absence and missing from school?