Attendance Policy

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Policy Statement

This school believes that good attendance is vital for all students if they are to gain the most from the education we provide. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and achievement. Every form tutor will regularly check the attendance of their class and will follow up a student's absences with appropriate personnel in school and where necessary the school will follow up with the child's parents/carers. We hope that parents/carers will assist us in our work of raising attendance levels throughout the school by:

- Ensuring the regular attendance of their child
- Informing the school when their child is absent from school
- Providing a reason for the absence
- Attending any meetings about their child's attendance, where necessary.

Context

- The government considers attendance below 90% to constitute persistent absence
- 80% attendance means a student is missing 1 full day of education every week.
- 80% attendance all the way through secondary school is the equivalent of missing a whole year of education.
- For every 10% drop in attendance, a student is likely to achieve 1 less GCSE.
- Over 95% attendance (1 day off every 4 weeks) gives students an 80% chance of achieving 5A*-C grades at GCSE.
- 90-94% attendance (1 day off a fortnight) gives students a 60% chance of achieving 5A*-C grades at GCSE.
- 85-89% attendance (1.5 days off a fortnight) gives students a 42% chance of achieving 5A*-C grades at GCSE.
- Less than 82% attendance (1 day off a week) gives students a 24% chance of achieving 5A*-C grades at GCSE.

The school will:
- Develop clear procedures to enable students to come to school.
- Support families to improve their child's attendance where necessary.
- Refer students with poor attendance to the Local Authority for additional support.
- Use the 'Fast track' prosecution process and 'Fixed penalty notices' where attendance does not improve.
- Ensure that all students and parents/carers/carers understand the issues and procedures for attendance.
- Ensure that all staff including administrative, support and non-teaching staff understand the issues and procedures for registration and attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/carers/carers must ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and ready to learn. If their child cannot attend school they will contact the school at the first opportunity and inform the school of the reason for the absence and the likely date of the child's return.

The Designated Lead (Deputy Principal)

The deputy principal is a key person in our school who motivates and leads the whole staff by demonstrating a commitment to promoting good attendance by:

- Ensuring regular celebrations of good attendance take place.
- Providing regular reports to the Advisory Board, CEO and Trust about attendance.
- Ensuring the monitoring and implementation of the agreed policy and procedures.
- Being available, if other channels of communication within school have been unsuccessful, for parents/carers/carers who may wish to discuss specific problems or in-school difficulties which their child is experiencing.
- Ensuring that appropriate training is provided as required on attendance.

TSA Advisory Board

The TSA Advisory Board of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance by supporting and encouraging students and teachers in their work.

Moorlands Learning Trust (MLT)

The Trust Board will regularly monitor and discuss attendance levels and trends and will ensure representation at Fast Track Panel meetings and meetings with parent/carers where appropriate.

The School Leadership Team

The school has a designated member of the Leadership Team to adopt specific responsibility for attendance matters. Over time s/he will develop an overall view of attendance matters in the school by:

- Line managing the school's Attendance Officer
- Leading and supporting the implementation of an attendance policy and framework for the school, within which specified responsibilities are delegated to identified members of staff.
- Monitoring and evaluating the work of staff to ensure that specific responsibilities described within the whole school framework are carried out consistently.
- Supporting staff in the development of clear guidelines for promoting good attendance.
- Supporting staff in the development of in-school strategies to tackle specific lesson truancy and post registration truancy.
- Supporting staff in the development of clear guidelines for identifying students who have begun to develop a pattern of absence.

The Pastoral Leaders

Pastoral Leaders have a very important role to play in the school's framework for promoting good attendance within their respective year group[s] by:

- Meeting with parents/carers of children who are developing or have developed a pattern of absences, and agreeing actions which may lead to the child beginning to attend more regularly.

- Ensuring that there are clear and understood attendance procedures in place for their areas of responsibility.
- Agreeing attendance action plans with the child's parents/carers and individual students where a pattern of absence is a cause for concern.
- Recognising and celebrating the good attendance of students in their year assemblies, tutor groups and through individual praise.

Tutors/Class Teachers

Tutors and subject teachers are ideally placed because of their regular contact with students to assess whether the explanations received for a child's absence are reasonable, or if the child is at an early stage in developing a pattern of absence.

In our school we recognise that building a good relationship with students is vital in promoting good attendance by:
- Ensuring that an accurate and timely register is taken using lesson monitor.
- Publicly praising those students who attend well, or make an effort to improve their attendance.
- Using the school registration system accurately to record authorised absences.
- Referring unexplained absences or patterns to absence to the relevant Pastoral Lead.
- Identifying students who are beginning to develop, or have developed a pattern of absence (95% - 85%) and refer to the Pastoral Team.
- Welcoming children back after they have been absent because of illness.
- Taking specific steps to assist children returning to school when they have been absent.
- Providing a positive role model through their own attendance and punctuality.
- Referring their concerns to the relevant Pastoral Leader.
- Making calls to parents when students are absent.

Clerical and Administrative Staff

Our administrative staff provide a great deal of valuable support in promoting attendance by:
- Passing information received from parents/carers at the school to the tutors regularly and consistently.
- Producing the school's good attendance certificates.
- Publishing individual students' attendance

Parents/Carers

This school believes that its students are able to achieve success when:
- School and family work in partnership.
- Parents/carers take an active interest in their child's work.
- Parents/carers ensure that their child attends school regularly and do not allow time off from school for trivial or unnecessary reasons.
- Parents/carers contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.00am and provide the reason for absence and intended return date.
- Parents/carers avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. New government legislation identifies that schools may no longer approve requests for holiday leave. An exceptional circumstance pro forma is available from the school. **Parents/carers must appreciate that booking**

holidays during term time because they are less expensive does not constitute an exceptional circumstance

- Parents/carers ensure that, so far as possible, any work that has been missed because of absence is completed, checking with the staff at school if necessary.
- Parents/carers attend any necessary meetings and respond as quickly as possible to any letters and information about their child's attendance.

The Role of Students

This school believes that all students should attend regularly if they are to succeed and reach their full potential. Students should:

- Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent through genuine illness.
- Arrive in school in time for registration and be punctual for the start of every lesson.
- Register at reception if they arrive after 9.00 am.
- Bring a note from home explaining the reason for absence following every session of absence.
- See individual teachers and catch up any work missed during the period of absence.
- Not leave the school premises during the school day without permission.

The Role of the Local Authority

The Local Authority will work to support the school by arranging for PACE interviews to be carried out where 'Fixed penalty' notices are required to improve attendance.

Strategies for maintaining good attendance and punctuality:

- This school believes in early intervention. If a student is recorded as absent in morning registration the school will aim to contact parents/carers that morning.
- Regular attendance is acknowledged and rewarded.
- Attendance and punctuality will be an issue for discussion within Senior Leadership meetings
- Students whose attendance is causing concern will be supported through the pastoral structure and inclusion meetings
- Results of the monitoring of electronic registration will be shared with staff to ensure all staff meet their statutory requirements re registration.
- Attendance will be a whole school focus subject to the school's procedures for improvement planning, monitoring and evaluation.