

## Attendance Policy

### SHERRARDSWOOD SCHOOL

#### ATTENDANCE POLICY

With the intention of enabling all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, Sherrardswood School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

#### **Statutory Framework**

A pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil. The school is obliged **by law** to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence and will maintain an admissions and attendance register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995.

#### **Rights and Responsibilities**

Maintaining good attendance and punctuality is the responsibility of everyone in the school community – pupils, parents and staff.

#### **Pupils**

All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and on time.

#### **Parents**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented, for any reason, from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible – by telephone, followed up by a letter explaining the above.

A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent; if at all possible, medical and dental appointments for children during school hours should be avoided. Parents will be promptly informed of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance.

#### **School**

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents and carers.

#### **Registration**

Registers will be called promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and will close at 9.45am. If a pupil fails to arrive before the registers close, he/she will be marked as "absent". Pupils who arrive after the registers have closed should report the School Office, so that the "absent" entry in the class register can be amended to a "late" mark.

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Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil has to be recorded as “unauthorised absence” for that session. (**See** Lateness Procedures in Staff Handbooks).

Registers will be inspected on a regular basis by the Senior Management Team/Pastoral Team Leader of the school.

### **Authorised/Unauthorised Absence**

Absence can be **authorised** if:

- the pupil was ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause;
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parent belongs;
- there is a family bereavement;
- the pupil is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition;
- the pupil is participating in an approved public performance;
- the pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g. If the pupils is attending the graduation of an older sibling);
- leave of absence is granted by the school for a family holiday of no more than two weeks.

Absence is **unauthorised** if;

- no explanation is forthcoming;
- the school is dissatisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional special reasons (e.g. a birthday);
- the pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period of time longer than that negotiated with the school (normally a maximum of two weeks);
- the pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval on their return.

### **Holidays**

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term time. Indeed, parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. If, however, parents apply to the school in advance by letter, requesting the absence from the Head teacher, the school may grant up to two weeks term-time absence in any school year to go on a family holiday. Apart from this, leave in term time can only be given in exceptional circumstances.

Occasionally, holiday of more than two weeks to visit family members living overseas may be planned. Parents are urged to discuss with school staff the most appropriate time of

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year and point in the child's educational career for this visit to take place. This will help minimise disruption to the child's progress at school.

### **Procedures for Following up Absence**

If a pupil is absent at morning registration and no message about the absence has been rectified, the school will attempt that day to make contact with home to determine the nature of the absence.

If a pupil is absent for more than three consecutive days (without an explanation being forthcoming) the school will contact the parents by letter.

If a pupil returns to school after an absence without a note, the school will contact the parents.