# PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE AT COLLINGWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Introduction

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The ‘otherwise’ includes home education.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations make provisions for the necessity of admission registers and attendance registers of pupils as well as the granting of leave of absence for pupils. Parents may not authorise absence; only headteachers or those authorised by the headteacher can do this. Schools may authorise any absence but inappropriate use can be just as damaging to a child’s education as unauthorised absence

Monitoring and controlling school attendance are a key part of Collingwood Primary School’s objectives. We believe that:

* Responsibility for promoting school attendance is shared by everyone in the school.
* The attendance policy touches all aspects of the school’s life, and relates directly to the school’s values, ethos and curriculum.
* Rigorous collection and analysis of data about attendance enables the school to check its progress against measurable outcomes.

Attendance at school is a vital part of a pupil’s education and has a heightened profile in this school with the Headteacher having responsibility for whole school attendance as well as oversight of the school’s pupil welfare system.

The Governors and Headteacher believe that it is important that the children in their care do not lose any schooling unnecessarily. In the primary phase this places the responsibility on parents and carers to ensure regular attendance.

# Objectives and targets

The aims of the attendance policy are:

* To encourage pupils to attend school regularly and therefore be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.
* To secure attendance at school unless absence is authorised.
* To identify problem areas that would explain non-attendance.
* To work together with parents and the educational social worker where necessary to maintain good attendance, securing help for pupils and/or parents with problems.

# Action plan

**Collingwood Primary School has implemented the following procedures:**

1. Publication regularly to the parents and pupils of the arrangements for notifying absence and the school’s policy towards authorised absence via the school’s website and by other means as necessary.
2. The governors, Headteacher and members of staff are also kept aware of the school’s policy on attendance and absence.
3. A reward system for good attendance at school.
4. A first day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge.
5. The Headteacher will liaise with the LA on measures to be taken if a pupil meets the criteria to be absent from education.

In order to deal with attendance problems effectively and efficiently, the following strategy will be followed by the school:

1. Registers will be marked accurately according to guidance in the staff handbook and in the register files (Ipads).
2. Attendance records kept for every class and all non-attendance checked against the daily register that will be taken at the beginning of the morning session and before the last period of the afternoon.
3. Teachers will observant of any patterns or increased absenteeism for individual children and refer to Mrs Grant or Mrs Cunningham for additional investigation.
4. Mrs Grant, Mrs Cunningham and Office staff will monitor attendance daily and telephone parents/carers when school has not been informed that a child will be absent. Home visits will be made if we are unable to contact parents.
5. Weekly monitoring and a half-termly computer print-out will highlight any pupil whose attendance is below 90% and their parents will be informed of this via our letter system and asked to attend a meeting in school with the Head or Deputy Head and other relevant staff, if appropriate. Parents will be reminded of their obligations to ensure attendance and a programme of support will be agreed if necessary. On a second occurrence, parents will be reminded of the legal action that can be taken and the fine that can be imposed.
6. The Attendance and Placement service will be informed about continued/regular absence or habitual lateness.
7. Family holidays must be requested at least a fortnight in advance, will be considered on an individual basis and will not normally be granted except in exceptional circumstances (a fine may be imposed).

At all times, parents will be informed of problems with any of the above.

**Collingwood Primary School**

**Parent Attendance Agreement:**

**Parents will have the responsibility to:**

* Make sure their children are educated between the age of 5 and 11 to the fullest extent.
* Inform the school on the first day of absence and state when they will return. Secure prior authority for authorised absences (0191 605 3378).
* Co-operate with school and the Attendance and Placement service if there are attendance problems.
* Make sure that your child has had a good night’s sleep – children need to be wide-awake to learn.

**Parents do not have the right to take children on holiday in term-time.** Family holidays must be requested at least a fortnight in advance, will be considered on an individual basis and will not normally be granted except in exceptional circumstances and where there is no undue interruption to a pupils’ work. SATs week, in particular, is of great importance and should not be missed. Parents will receive a letter from the Headteacher indicating the course of action which may involve a fine.

**Attendance and Placement Service: Information for parents and carers**

Parents have a prime responsibility to ensure that their children attend school. If a child does not attend regularly, parents should work closely with the school, family support and The Attendance and Placement Service to resolve the problem. The Attendance and Placement officers have the following legal powers to enforce attendance:

* School attendance orders.
* Prosecution for irregular attendance. There are two offences relating to parental responsibility for ensuring regular school attendance:
* One is a matter of simple fact – if the child is absent without authorisation (truancy) then the parent is guilty of an offence. Penalties can include a fine of up to £1,000.
* The other – an aggravated offence – requires proof that the parent knew about the child’s absence and failed to act. Penalties can include a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence of up to three months.

Other possible sentences (for both offences) include parenting orders, fines and community orders:

* Penalty notices for irregular attendance (£60–£120 fines).
* Education supervision orders.



# Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher and Deputy Head will keep attendance regularly under review and report to the governing board once a term on the attendance figures and any particular problems.

The policy will be evaluated by the governors following reports from the senior management, Attendance and Placement and others.

# Reviewing

The policy will be reviewed and altered in the light of any concerns brought by from any of the above and where changes in legislation make it necessary and on an annual basis regardless.

***Next school review due: September 2024***