

# **PATTERDALE C OF E SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

This policy was drawn up by up by E.V.Stewart and the curriculum committee.

Adopted September 2013  
To be reviewed Autumn 2014

Signed (Chair of Governors)

Date

**Our school will offer an environment in which the pupils feel valued and welcome.**

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Parents and carers**

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.(please see our Home-School Agreement)

If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is going to be late, parents are requested to notify the school by 9.30 am on the same day and each subsequent day of absence – by phone call or message, and followed up in writing or by a personal visit to the school, on the child's return.

### **Pupils**

Pupils will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level.

### **Governors**

Attendance will be an agenda item at the first Governors' meeting after the completion of the previous term. The head teacher will report to the governing body at this meeting highlighting progress against the school's Improvement plan.

The Governing Body has nominated the Curriculum Committee to work alongside the Head on attendance issues. Attendance also appears on the agendas of the Safeguarding Committee as attendance can highlight safeguarding issues.

An attendance summary and action plan for the following year will be incorporated in the prospectus.

## **School**

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.

Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff), who will respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care. Good attendance is rewarded (see Behaviour policy) on a weekly basis using our house point system and, on a termly basis when children will be given certificates for 100% attendance.

A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received.

All unaccounted for absences will be promptly investigated, and parents and pupils will be kept informed about any attendance concerns. (see separate procedure document)

Pupils and/or parents who experience difficulties with regular attendance will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from the head teacher.

External support services through triage or Family Support Worker, will support school and families when attendance becomes a concern. The school recognises that poor attendance can be an indication of safeguarding issues, and recognise their duty of care in connection with this.

Attendance issues will be given the highest profile through the Parent's Evenings, the School prospectus, Newsletters, letter prior to commencing school and the school website at [www.patterdale.cumbria.sch.uk](http://www.patterdale.cumbria.sch.uk)

## **REGISTRATION**

Registers will be taken punctually each day at 9.00 am and at 1.00 pm.

Registers will be closed at 9.15 am. Pupils arriving between 9 am and 9.15 am will receive an 'L' for late mark. A pupil arriving after the register has been closed will receive a 'U' late mark, which indicates unauthorised absence for that session, where there has been no advance notification from the parent/carer.

### **Authorised absence**

Absence will be authorised for:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments, but wherever possible these should be made outside school hours.
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances

### **Unauthorised absence**

Absence will not be authorised for:

- shopping trips
- looking after family members
- domestic chores
- birthdays or similar events
- holidays in term time
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### **Approved education activity**

Pupils will not be deemed absent when out of school to take part in official:

- sporting activities
- educational visits

**NB** When categorisation of absence changes, the School Administrator advises staff accordingly.

### **Holidays in term time**

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on **1 September 2013**.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

This policy is based on the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 which increased the current amounts of penalty notices payable by parents from 1 September 2013.

These will apply to any parent who fails to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is registered at a state school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not found in a public place during schools hours without a justifiable reason.

The amounts stated on the penalty notices will increase from £50 to £60 for those who pay within 28 days; and from £100 to £120 for those who pay within 42 days.

### *Who is authorised to issue penalty notices?*

A Police Constable, Local Authority Officer, Head teachers and those authorised by them (Deputy and Assistant Head only).

All state schools can use penalty notices including maintained, academies, Free Schools, alternative provision and pupil referral units in England. Cumbria LA has published a local code of conduct which sets out how the penalty notice scheme will work for Cumbria Schools (Academies may differ from this Code). This can be found in 'School Absence and Enforcement Policy' (last updated December 2012).

Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as;

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Parents' employment restrictions – there are very few employers who restrict their employees' holiday leave. You may wish to consider asking for some evidence from the employer
- Significant family events or circumstances – these will need to be considered individually.

The following would generally not meet the criteria unless there are additional circumstances.

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different half terms or holidays.

If leave is granted, the Head Teacher will determine the number of days a child can be away from school, and, parents must appreciate it is their responsibility to ensure their child catches up with any missed work on their return.

Parents should apply in writing to the Head Teacher if they need to request leave of absence due to 'exceptional circumstances', at least 10 school days in advance of the time.

Before granting any leave of absence the school will give consideration to:

- the pupil's previous attendance
- academic progress
- any examination commitments

### **FOLLOWING UP LATENESS AND ABSENCE**

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to contact the school by 9.30 am on the first day of all absences, and where possible to give a return date. Where this is not possible the parent/carer should keep in regular contact with school.

If a pupil is absent regularly, or apparently unnecessarily, the school will contact parents/carers to notify them of the school's concern and to emphasise the parent/carers' legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance. (see document outlining procedures which are instigated when attendance drops below 95%)

If a pupil is persistently absent and the school's normal procedures have not been successful, advice will be sought from county triage or the Family Support Officer.

Pupils who are absent through sickness, or any other unavoidable cause, for an extended period will be supported in continuing their education at home where this is possible, and will be supported in re-integrating back into school on their return.

### **PROMOTING ATTENDANCE**

The governing body will set their own attendance target annually. The target for 2012/13 is 96%, and for 2013/14 is 97%.

Within the confines of the National Curriculum, pupils will be offered a varied, flexible and rewarding education matched to their individual needs. They will not be able to take full advantage of this unless they attend regularly.

The school will employ a range of strategies, sanctions and rewards to encourage good attendance and punctuality. (see Behaviour policy)

Attendance data will be collected and analysed regularly, and combined with an annual review of the school attendance policy will inform future practice and school targets which will be set out in an action plan to be shared with parents and carers.

Regular liaison between feeder primary schools and secondary schools will identify pupils who may require extra support during the transition into Yr 7.

### **STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

The school's policy is based on Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act which states,

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient, full time education suitable

- a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- b) to any special needs he may have,

"either by attendance at school or otherwise."

Failure to do so is a strict liability offence (Section 444(1), 1996 Education Act) with a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine per parent per child.

Where parents are shown to have known that their child was out of school without leave of the Headteacher and that they “without reasonable justification” failed to cause the child to attend, they may be found guilty of a higher offence with a maximum penalty of £2500 per parent per child, and/or 3 month imprisonment (Section 444(1A), 1996 Education Act).

Parenting Orders requiring parents and carers to attend parenting skills sessions can also be applied to both offences.