



Children do better  
when they go to  
school all day,  
every day

# Smithdon Cluster Attendance Policy

They learn better  
They make friends better  
They have a brighter  
future



Ingoldisthorpe C. of E.  
Primary School





## THE SMITHDON CLUSTER ATTENDANCE POLICY

### **Rationale**

The Smithdon Cluster of schools is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We have developed this as a Cluster Policy in order to give a consistent response to all students and families in our care.

We want to do our best for all our children and believe that regular attendance at school is vital for children as it promotes good learning, positive attitudes and maintains continuity in their education and in their friendships.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by a parent.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills .

Each year the Cluster schools will examine their attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Norfolk attendance targets. The Cluster schools will discuss their attendance figures and the success of this policy on an annual basis and will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

### **Procedures**

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

### **Lateness**

The Cluster schools set their own registration times. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:45am. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes. Any pupil arriving after 30 mins

will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Medical evidence may be requested to support the absence.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

### **First Day Absence**

On the first day of an absence parents and carers should contact their child's school before the registration period closes. If no contact has been made, the Attendance Lead will endeavor to contact parents or carers as quickly as possible during the school day and will transfer information to the registers, alerting the Headteacher or other key staff to any wellbeing issues. If we have not had any contact from parents by the end of the morning of absence, we will phone / text them. We will continue to make daily contact until we get a response. We will also make general enquires during this time and try other contact numbers.

### **Ten Day's Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority as a 'Child Missing Education', by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Children in Need Team, This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

### **Frequent Absence**

It is the responsibility of all the staff in each Cluster school to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

We monitor attendance periodically. Any pupil whose attendance is falling lower than the national average or causing concern will be contacted by the school.

We will look for patterns and reasons for absence, making parents aware of the number of absences and the importance of attendance etc. Additional support may be available from outside agencies. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) Action may include the use of the Fast Track system and/or Fixed Penalty Notices. Monitoring will continue and a common assessment framework meeting could be considered.

### **A Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

### **Absence notes**

Notes of telephone calls received and written notes from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the time that child attends the that school. If there is attendance concerns about the pupil then further medical evidence may be required (e.g. doctors note, prescription, medicine label). Headteachers retain the right to unauthorise absence without medical evidence.

### **Promoting attendance**

The Smithdon Cluster are actively working together to improve attendance in our area and giving consistent messages about the importance of good attendance. The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education and will make clear the links between attendance and attainment.

Information about attendance, our procedures and attendance rates are published in the School Prospectus.

The Home/School agreement mentions the importance of good attendance and parent responsibility and a promotional leaflet will be used.

### **Attendance Awards**

The Cluster schools will reward pupils/students who have good or improving attendance in particular through praising the individual child and, for example, by awarding certificated for 100% attendance on a termly basis.

### **Holidays in term time**

Holidays during term time will not be authorized, in line with government guidelines (July 2013). Request for absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Requests should be made in writing detailing the circumstance and length of absence. Cluster heads will discuss exceptional circumstances to ensure consistency.

### **The registration system**

The School will use a computerized system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (AM)	Present
<b>\</b>	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Leave of absence authorized by school	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (only in exceptional circumstances)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes.

Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three year.

### ***Register Security***

The registers must be safely stored in the school office.

### **Documents used to support this policy:**

- A promotional leaflet: "School Attendance Matters"
- Template school letters regarding attendance
- Medical form to support absence
- Smithdon Cluster leaflet

### **Policy Review**

This policy was drawn up in agreement with all of the schools in the Smithdon Cluster. It was accepted by the cluster governance Autumn 2013, and will be reviewed annually.

## Appendices

### 1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 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 regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:  
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

## **Categorisation of Absence**

**Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.**

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

### **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

**Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration