POLICY NAME: Attendance Policy

Purpose:	Establishes requirements for registering absence and processes to be followed in the event of absence from school.
Statutory:	☐**NO**
Status:	☐ Approved
Date Approved:	June 2019
Date of Next Review:	June 2024
Frequency of Review:	Details: Every 5 years
Approving Authority:	☐ FGB
Cross references/ related policies:	
Audience:	Staff and parents/carers
Summary of Contents:	Procedures for parents/carers and staff to register lateness and absence. Forms to request exceptional leave of absence and safeguarding process to follow in event of unexplained or persistent absence.
Impact Statement:	Consider asking: - Is implementation going as planned? - Is the policy making a difference? - What impact is the policy having on improving standards? - What are the strengths and weaknesses of the policy? - What more is being done, or needs to be done?
Recommendations for Amendments:	

Pupil Attendance and Lateness Policy – March 2019

Introduction, aims, purpose of policy
We expect all children on roll to attend every day on time, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Once a child is enrolled at school, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances for which absence is authorised by the school. Advice on parents' legal responsibilities can be obtained from the following link.
http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/YourChildsWelfareAtSchool/DG_06696
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Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This register will also indicate whether an absence was 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. The school adopts the 2013 amendments to the school attendance regulations.
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00223868/regulations-amendments

Our aims and objectives in relation to pupils' attendance are to:
- maximise attendance so that all pupils can gain full access to our curriculum and be enabled to reach their full academic potential and achieve a high level of personal and social well-being;
- ensure children are on time and ready to start their lessons;
- eliminate unauthorised absence;
- discourage families from arranging holidays during school terms;
- ensure that parents and carers understand clearly when it is appropriate to keep their children off school and when this constitutes unauthorised absence;
- ensure that school staff and parents are familiar with and adhere to our procedures for registering pupils' attendance, and reporting, recording and following up absence or lateness;
- ensure that pupils and their parents and carers understand the importance of regular and consistent attendance as well as ensuring that their children come to school on time;
- make clear to parents the consequences of failing to ensure that their children attend school;

Regular attendance is crucial in securing every pupil's educational development and ability to achieve their full potential. Irregular attendance leads to educational disadvantage and also places children at risk. The Vineyard hopes that parents and staff work in partnership to ensure the good attendance of its pupils. Every pupil is set a target of 97% attendance. Absence of 10% is considered "persistently absent" and is the equivalent of a day off every two weeks.

Policy summary
The first part of the policy describes the role of the parents and their statutory responsibilities. If a child is absent then parents should report this to the school giving the reasons. The school will decide whether the absence is authorised or un-authorised. Requests for leave of absence during term time are will not be authorised if the request is because of a holiday. In the unavoidable case of long-term absence caused, for example by illness, the school will do what it can to ensure the child's education does not suffer. Where a child is repeatedly late or absent then the Local Authority Education Welfare Service will become involved. The governing body recognise the importance of attendance and lateness and set targets for the school and monitor the data on a regular basis.

The following points and procedures clarify the precise responsibilities of each:
1. Parents are asked to limit their children's absences to cases of real illness.

No child will be permitted to take a holiday during term time. However, it is acknowledged that there may be special circumstances where a parent feels that their child needs to be taken out of school. In these circumstances, parents should write to the headteacher, requesting absence, clearly stating the reasons for the proposed absence. She will then consider the circumstance and respond. Where the decision is taken to refuse permission, the absence will remain unauthorised should the parent ignore this. In addition, the school may also refer the matter to the Educational Welfare Officer attached to the school. Where a pupil is absent immediately before or after a school holiday, medical evidence is required to authorise the absence, without this the Education Welfare Officer will be informed

2. Appointments for doctors, dentists, opticians etc, should be made out of school hours as much as possible.

3. Pupils who arrive after 8.55AM will have to come in via the school office.

4. On the first day of absence, parents are expected to contact the school by telephone or email absence@vineyard.richmond.sch.uk by 8.30am, that day. Written confirmation is not needed if verbal confirmation is needed but either a verbal or a written message must be given to the school office. Without this, the absence is unauthorised. If there are attendance concerns, additional written evidence will be requested.

5. Class teachers will monitor the attendance of their class constantly and carefully. Any absence of 3 days or more without communication from home will be followed up immediately by the class teacher and the Attendance Officer contacting parents. The Attendance Officer will also contact parents whenever there is any doubt or concern regarding a pupil's absence. Even if notes are received, cases of frequent absence or other areas of concern, will be brought to the Headteacher, Safeguarding Lead and EWO's attention.

6. All requested evidence concerning absence should be given to the Attendance Officer. Any areas of concern will be followed up.

7. The Attendance Officer, class teacher and Safeguarding Lead should monitor the attendance patterns across the school, and be watchful for signs of individual absence.

The Attendance officer will meet with the Educational Welfare Officer on a regular and frequent basis to discuss those pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. The school will make a referral to the EWO where:
i). there has been no parental response to communications from the school regarding absence.
ii) Attendance continues to be unsatisfactory in spite of contact with parents.
iii) There is 10% or more unauthorised absence
iv) The pupil's attendance has fallen below 85% and there are insufficient medical grounds for this non-attendance.
v) The pupil was absent at the start or end of term, indicating unauthorised holiday

1. The Attendance Officer will send letters of concern to pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. Which pupils are sent letters will be agreed with the EWO during their regular meeting. She will keep a record of all action taken and agreed at these meetings and any interim action with dates and up to date attendance %.

2. All referrals to the EWO and any other causes for concern which are not improving should be discussed with the Headteacher and Safeguarding Lead before being passed to the EWO.

3. The Attendance Officer will chase pupils who have an unexplained absence on a daily basis by communicating with the class teacher, pupil and parent, involving the Headteacher wherever necessary.

Procedures for Registers, Lateness

TEACHERS

Attendance registers are legal documents and should be treated as such. It is essential that they are accurate no blanks should be left.

1. Teachers will be expected to take a register by 9:00am and immediately after lunch.

2. If a pupil arrives after the register has been taken then their mark will be amended and they are marked as "late" (L).

3. If a child is absent, the class teacher marks the absence as "N". The Attendance Officer will correctly code the absence based on the reasons given by the parent.

4. When the Attendance Officer is clear that the absence was without school authorisation or no evidence or explanation has been given, the code for unauthorised absence (O) should be entered.

5. If Integris is not working for whatever reason, subject teachers must complete a paper register which has been dated and signed, detailing who is present in the lesson and return to the office immediately in order that the data can be entered at a later date.

The school has final responsibility for the authorisation of absences and the investigation of reasons for absence. Therefore, any member of staff should refer any concerns around absence to the following two key members of staff, **Designated Safeguarding Lead** and **Headteacher**. If the Attendance Officer requires clarification s/he will speak to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The appropriate code for absence must be entered. (See below). This may only be done when you have received a note or direct telephone communication from parents.

School response to absence:
- If there are attendance or safeguarding concerns around a pupil who has an unexplained absence, the school will contact home in the first session of absence
- If there are no standing concerns around a pupil who has an unexplained absence, the school will contact home via telephone and email.

1. ATTENDANCE CODES

Codes used in official registers and shared with parents in end of year reports

= partial or whole school closure (attendance not required)
= not yet marked
/ = present
B = educated off site
C = other authorised circumstance
D = dual registration (attend elsewhere)
E = excluded (no alternative provision)
G = family holiday (NOT agreed)
I = illness (not medical or dental)
J = interview
L = before registration closed
M = medical/dental appointment (authorised)

N = no reason yet provided for absence
O = unauthorised absence
P = approved sporting activity
R = religious observance (authorised)
S = study leave
T = traveller absence
U = late after register closed
V = educational visit or trip
W = work experience
X = non-compulsory school age
Y = unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z = pupil not on roll

2. Attendance and lateness – key information for parents - Did You Know...?

- Each year there are only 190 school days, this means that there are 175 days for shopping, birthday treats, non-urgent medical appointments, dental appointments and holidays, etc.
- If a child misses a day a week for their entire school life it is the equivalent of missing 2 years of school.

Impact of Poor Attendance

% Attendance	= % absence	= Days missed	= approx GCSE grades dropped	= weeks missed	= Years missed (over 5 years of education
100%	0%	0	0	0	0
90%	10%	19	1	4	0.5
80%	20%	38	1-2	8	1
70%	30%	57	2-3	12	1.5
60%	40%	76	3-4	15	2
50%	50%	95	4-5	19	2.5

Late Arrivals

☐ **5** minutes late = **3** days lost each year

☐ **10** minutes late = **6.5** days lost each year

☐ **15** minutes late = **10** days lost each year

☐ **20** minutes late = **13** days lost each year

☐ **30** minutes late = **19** days lost each year

APPLICATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Name of child (ren): _____

Class or classes: _____

First date of child's absence: _____

Date child will be back in school: _____

Reason for absence: _____

_____

_____

I understand that I am **NOT** entitled to any leave of absence during term time. I understand that any absence from school will be recorded by the school as unauthorised, unless the Head Teacher has authorised the absence before departure because of **exceptional circumstances,** such as family bereavement. Under the new statutory regulations introduced in 2013 holidays taken during term time cannot be authorised.

I understand that because of the School Attendance Regulations, the Head Teacher will be obliged to remove my child's name from the school roll if s/he does not return to school within ten school days of the date given above.
I also understand that it is impossible to guarantee that a place will be available in the school upon return.

I accept responsibility for providing my child's education during the time that s/he is absent from school. The parent/carer is responsible for providing this work, not the school.

I have attached documentation to support my application.

Signed: _____ **Date**: _____

Please print name: _____
(Mother/Father/Registered Carer)

_____

For office use only:

Date application received:	Number of days authorised:
Current attendance: Previous attendance:	Parental condoned truancy Number of days of unauthorised absence:
Total number of days requested:	Signed:
Number of previous requests for absence:	Date:

Safeguarding Children Missing Education Process for Schools

Day One: The school identifies that a child is not in school. A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent/carer that the child is safe at home.

Result	Action
There is no answer at the home or on mobile Numbers.	Call back. Risk assess after 2 hours
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is safe with them	Ask for reason for absence and record
The person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe.	The school's designated lead for child protection consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child.
The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned.	School to advise the parent to: • Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searching for the child • Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment • Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing

If the judgement on Day One is that there is reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm the School will contact Police /Social Services immediately.

If the judgement on Day One is that there is no reason to believe that the child is at risk of harm School continues to make enquiries and informs Education Welfare Service on Day Three that the child Is missing in education.

School Risk Assessment for Children Missing Education

Assessing vulnerability requires a combination of professional knowledge and experience of child
Welfare issues and knowledge of local circumstances. Considering the following questions could assist the process.
If in doubt always consult with managers or other services.

Criteria	Risk	Action
Is there good reason to believe that the child may be the victim of a crime?	🟥	Inform police
Does the child have a formal child protection plan?	🟥	
Is the child in care i.e. looked after by the local authority?	🟥	
Is there planned or current LA children's social care or LA adults' social care services involvement? e.g. section 47 enquiry about to start.	🟥	Follow up with a referral
Is there a person present in or visiting the family who poses an on-going risk to children, or who is suspected of previously harming a child?	🟥	
Is the child at risk of sexual exploitation ?	🟥	
Has there been LA children's social care or LA adults' social care or Criminal Justice System involvement in the past?	🟧	Give consideration to the vulnerability of the child and following risk assessment inform one or all of the following :
Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? E.g. FGM or forced marriage.	🟧	
Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?	🟧	Police Safeguarding Officer Children's social care. Local Authority Designated Officer. Education Welfare Service. Use other services to help with your risk assessment.
Is there any known history of domestic violence?	🟧	
Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?	🟧	
Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?	🟧	
Has the child been a victim of bullying?	🟧	
Does the child need essential medication or health care?	🟧	
Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?	🟧	
Has the child gone missing with their family?	🟧	
Have the parents been subject to proceedings in relation to attendance?	🟧	
Is there a history of poor attendance?	🟧	
Has there been any change in the child/family's financial circumstances?	🟧	
Age of the child	🟧	