



# THE PILGRIM SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**School Lead: Pastoral Manager**

**Governor Lead: Wellbeing Committee**

**Last reviewed: 11 May 2016**

**Date of next review: December 2018**

**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- **Child Protection and safeguarding policy**
- **Behaviour policy**
- **Supporting pupils with a medical condition policy**

**Signed by Chair of Governors:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed by Chair of Committee:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Pilgrim School is committed to providing as full and efficient an education as possible for all of our pupils.

Pupils receiving education through our provision are not attending their mainstream school due to a diagnosed medical illness which prevents them from doing so. For many of our pupils, this provision offers a much needed second chance to engage in education.

The school endeavours to provide alternative provision in the home to those pupils unable to access a base due to the nature of their medical condition.

It is our policy that pupils should attend for as much time as possible within the constraints of their condition. Statutory Guidance from the Department of Education (2013) has highlighted the need for all students to have access to 25 hours education per week.

## **AIMS**

- Where possible, pupils should attend a base (unless their illness prevents them from doing so). In this instance, 1-1 tuition in the home, or at an alternative venue, may be put in place.
- To acknowledge the difficult, individual circumstances of our pupils and to ensure that no pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their need and personal development.
- To strive to do all we can to ensure that all learners achieve maximum **possible** attendance, and that any problems affecting attendance are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- Teaching centres provide a welcoming environment for pupils and parents, enabling them to access a positive experience of education and develop positive relationships with staff and other learners.
- Regular reviews and extensive pastoral support are available to ensure all pupils attend well and provision is appropriate to medical need.
- For pupils to reintegrate back to their mainstream school once the medical professional(s) involved feels their health has improved sufficiently and Pilgrim involvement is no longer required.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

**Base taught pupils are expected to:**

- Attend regularly

- Arrive on time and be prepared for the day
- Inform a member of staff of any problem that may prevent them from attending

**Pupils taught on a 1:1 basis are expected to:**

- Attend regularly
- Be ready to learn when the teacher arrives
- Inform their teacher or support staff of any problem that may prevent them from engaging

**Parents are expected to:**

- Fulfil their responsibility in ensuring that their child attends regularly
- Contact the teaching centre (base taught) or school office (1:1) on the first and each subsequent day that their child is unable to attend
- Ensure that their child arrives and is ready on time and is well prepared for learning
- Ensure that holidays are not taken during term time, and particularly not in examination periods
- Work closely with the school to resolve any problems that may impede pupil attendance
- Support their child and recognise their successes and achievements

**The Pastoral Manager will:**

- Develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees
- Report on attendance to parents and governors at regular intervals
- Report on attendance to the referring school, where requested or appropriate
- Monitor attendance data at regular intervals throughout each term.
- Oversee the rewards system

**The school will ensure that all staff:**

- Deliver a quality education

- Record attendance regularly, efficiently and accurately
- Contact parents when a pupil fails to attend without providing good reason
- Respond promptly and discretely to any relevant problem notified
- Encourage good attendance
- Endeavour to reintegrate pupils who attend after a period of absence, sensitively and positively.
- Work collaboratively with parents, all agencies and professionals involved to encourage good attendance.

### **PROCEDURES FOR ATTENDANCE**

- Registration will open at the start of the morning, mid-morning and afternoon sessions.
- Pupils should be in attendance at the start of each registration period and staff should be there to greet them.
- Key staff will insert a mark **for every pupil**, whether it is a present or an absent mark. In the event of absence where no reason has been received, procedures are in place. (Appendix 1).
- Electronic registers will be completed at the end of each registration period (10 am, 11.40 am and 2 pm respectively).
- If pupils arrive after the beginning of their first lesson of the day, they should report to a member of staff. If they arrive more than half an hour after the start of their school day, they will be deemed to be late.
- If pupils are frequently late, parents will be informed.
- Parents will be notified of attendance on progress reports.

### **REWARDS**

- Individual postcards, phone calls home and verbal praise will be used throughout the school year as appropriate.
- At the end of each term, regular attendees will be rewarded with a certificate and pupils will be entered into a draw for a voucher. The school will also acknowledge those pupils with the most improved attendance at this point.

- Those students with genuine authorised absence, either through medical or religious observance reasons, will not be penalised.

### **PERSISTENT ABSENCE**

- The school recognises that some students will not achieve consistent regular attendance due to their medical condition. Attendance is considered on an individual basis and every effort is made to continue academic progress during periods of absence.
- Where absence is not supported by medical evidence, the school has procedures in place. (Appendix 2).

### **REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

If a parent wishes to request a period of leave they are required to write to the Headteacher. If the request is denied the school will inform the parent of the reason by letter. In these instances, any absence will then be marked as unauthorised. Leave of absence will **not** be offered to pupils for family holidays except under exceptional circumstances.

## Appendix 1: First day procedure

- Pupil not in school when register closes. No message received.
- Key member of staff in each base to contact parent to ascertain a reason (text/email/call)
- E-portal log – inform CM/RSO
- If no response, leave message asking parent to contact school asap: “I am informing that your child is absent from school today. Please could you contact the school office, as soon as possible, to advise why they are absent. If we do not hear from you, we may conduct an unplanned home visit or request a safe and well check by the police as this may be a safeguarding concern”.
- Contact second named adult (where possible).
- Contact other agencies with concerns.
- If concerned about child’s safety, conduct a safe and well check. This may be requested from the police if appropriate staffing is not available in school.
- Send letter requesting reason for absence (on shared drive)
- If we have had no response within three days and pupil remains absent, a home visit must be actioned.

## Appendix 2: Persistent absence

1. Pupil attendance is less than 70% of provision offered or there has been a sudden decline.

2. Can absence be explained?

Yes

No

**Check medical evidence is linked to diagnosis and up to date (request updated evidence if necessary)**

- Monitor closely
- If pupil does not return to school within expected timeframe, RSO to do safe & well checks/call home on a regular basis
- Send work home via email or post/visit (co-ordinated by CM/RSO)
- Review provision
- Inform referring agencies

3. Review arranged **immediately** with pupil and parents (see info below in step 4).  
Remind pupil and parents that sanctions exist and privileges (prom, work exp, off site) could be withdrawn.

### 4. At review:

If in induction – is it the right provision?

Inform mainstream school of problems with attendance.

Set time limited targets for attendance or amend timetable if appropriate. Transition plan?

Involve other agencies: Health, TAC/Social Care, EP etc

Parents to sign review documentation

### 5. If attendance fails to improve or transition steps are not met:

Write to parents informing them that there will be no further authorised absence unless medical evidence is provided and the place at Pilgrim may be at risk.

### 6. If medical evidence is not provided:

Inform parents that a referral may be made to EWO and/or provision may be removed. Ensure mainstream school are kept informed.

**Should attendance continue to fall, consider removing provision (only if medical advice suggests current provision is appropriate).**