Shipbourne School

Attendance Policy Summary

At Shipbourne School, we firmly believe that regular school attendance is essential for the educational progress and overall wellbeing of our pupils. We are therefore sharing this summary of our Attendance Policy so that we can work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for your child during their time with us.

Why regular attendance matters

Consistent school attendance allows your child to:

- Fully engage in learning and make academic progress
- Develop critical social skills by interacting with their friends and teachers
- Grow in confidence in a supportive and nurturing school environment
- Build a sense of routine and responsibility, essential for future success

Attendance support

We understand that some pupils may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our school's staff team is here to provide support and guidance to pupils and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to me, your child's class teacher or Mrs Hayward, our SENCo, as felt most appropriate.

Punctuality

It is an expectation that your child will arrive in school by 8.45am at the latest. Arriving late is both disruptive to your child and their class and should not happen on a regular basis. We also ask that you avoid being late to collect your child at the end of the day as this can cause distress. If you know you will be late, please message us on MCAS to let us know so that we can reassure your child.

Acceptable reasons for absence

We recognise that there are circumstances where a pupil's absence can't be avoided.

Acceptable reasons for being absent from school include:

- **Illness**: when your child is unwell, either physically or mentally, and unable to attend school. Please refer to the NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? to decide whether your child can safely come in
- **Medical appointments**: if your child has a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, please notify us in advance and provide relevant documentation if you have it. Where absence is unavoidable, please ensure that your child attends school before/after the appointment so that they are absent for as short a time as possible.
- **Religious observance**: we respect the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of our pupils. Days officially set aside for religious observance will therefore be authorised if an absence request is submitted in advance.
- **Exceptional circumstances**: in exceptional situations, such as family emergencies or unforeseen events, please contact the school immediately to discuss the absence and support that may be required.

How to report absences

Please use MCAS absence portal to notify us of any planned absences in advance.

In the event of an unplanned absence, we ask that you follow these steps:

1. **Contact the school:** on the day of the absence, please use MCAS absence portal to notify us by 9am. If your child is absent for more than a day, please update us on at least day 3 and 5.

2. **Provide a reason for absence:** please provide a brief explanation for the absence, such as illness or family emergency, to help us maintain accurate records

Term-time holidays

Term-time holidays are not permitted at any point during the school year. Absences due to term-time holidays are disruptive to learning, lead to missed opportunities in the classroom and will always be unauthorised. If you decide to take a term time holiday, please contact us via MCAS absence portal, with reasons for your decision, so that a record may be kept on your child's file.

Sanctions for unauthorised absence

A fine (known as a penalty notice) may be issued for unauthorised absence. If issued with one, you will need to pay this directly to the local authority – £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

The decision whether to issue a fine will take into account whether the national threshold has been met – namely 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks – as well as other factors.

Before a fine is issued, you may receive a notice to improve to give you a chance to engage with support.

Support for poor attendance and punctuality

Although we understand that some absence is unavoidable, we will take proactive action should repeated or prolonged absence or lateness occur. We will always aim to work in partnership with you to improve your child's attendance, and ask that you let us know if you identify barriers emerging so that we can take pre-emptive action before a difficulty significantly impacts your child.

Rewards for good attendance

Attendance for all pupils is reviewed on a termly basis with those achieving 100% in any one long-term receiving MCAS reward points to recognise this achievement. Certificates are presented to pupils achieving 100% attendance for a whole school year. MCAS points may also be used where a significant improvement in attendance or punctuality is achieved.

Full details of our approach to attendance can be found in the full policy on MCAS documents and our website. Should you have any questions, now or in the future, please do not hesitate to get in touch.