



# **Attendance and Truancy Policy**

July 2020

**Attendance and Truancy Policy**  
**QUEENSGATE FOUNDATION PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Policy Review**

This policy is adopted from the School Bus is reviewed in full by the Governing Board on three-yearly basis.  
The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Board on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020.  
It will be reviewed again July 2023.

**Approved**



Signature: ..... Head Teacher

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020



Signature: ..... Chair of the Governing Board

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020

**Policy control**

Date	Amendments / additions	Reason
July 2020	1.3 Addition of policies	Reviewed

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## Statement of intent

Queensgate Foundation Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Queensgate Foundation Primary School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 2011, which states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils
- Rewarding regular attendance

## 1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Education Act 1996
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
  - Keeping Children safe in Education
- 1.2. This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - DfE (2014) 'School attendance'
- 1.3 This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:
  - Complaints Procedure
  - Pupil Behaviour Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The Governing Board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of Queensgate Foundation Primary School
- 2.2. The Governing Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation
- 2.3. The Governing Board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy
- 2.4. The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy and procedures of the school
- 2.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Primary Attendance and Truancy Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- 2.6. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time
- 2.7. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day
- 2.8. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:
  - **"Absence"** as:
    - Arrival at school after the register has closed
    - Not attending school for any reason
  - An **"authorised absence"** as:
    - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
    - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
    - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
    - An absence due to a family emergency
  - An **"unauthorised absence"** as:
    - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
    - Truancy before or during the school day
    - Absences which have never been properly explained
    - Arrival at school after the register has closed
    - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
    - Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
    - Leaving school for no reason during the day
  - **"Persistent absenteeism"** as:
    - Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

#### **4. Training of staff**

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their new starter induction
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development

#### **5. Pupil expectations**

- 5.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day and will sign an agreement at the beginning of each school year, to agree to keep their attendance at, or above, 95 percent throughout the year
- 5.2. We action any child at 92%

#### **6. Absence procedures**

- 6.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence
- 6.2. Parents are required to send a note in on the first day that their child returns with a signed explanation of why they were absent; this is required even if the parent/carer has already contacted the school via phone call
- 6.3. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff
- 6.4. A phone call will be made to the parent/carer of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school
- 6.5. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer
- 6.6. If a pupil's absence drops below 90 percent, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents
- 6.7. The attendance officer will look at patterns of absence including broken weeks, even if the percentage isn't at 90%

#### **7. Contact information**

- 7.1. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
- 7.2. Parents are responsible for updating the school if their details change

#### **8. Attendance officer**

- 8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement
- 8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Education Welfare Service has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices

#### **9. Lateness**

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated; the school doors open from 08.40am
- 9.2. The school day starts at 8:55am. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time
- 9.3. Registers are marked by 9:25am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- 9.4. The register closes at 9:25am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- 9.5. After lunch, registers are marked by 1:15pm.
- 9.6. The register closes at 1:30pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

#### **10. Term-time leave**

- 10.1. At Queensgate Foundation Primary School our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed
- 10.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time
- 10.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave
- 10.4. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher
- 10.5. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account
- 10.6. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
  - Immediately before and during assessment periods
  - When a pupil's attendance record shows any **unauthorised absence**
  - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason
- 10.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines

## 11. Truancy

- 11.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence
- 11.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning
- 11.3. All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:55am and 1:15pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically
- 11.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return
- 11.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting
- 11.6. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, who will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school
- 11.7. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:
  - In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken
  - If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice
  - A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school

## 12. Missing children

- 12.1. Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the headteacher
- 12.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:
  - The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately
  - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
  - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher
  - The following areas will be systematically searched:
    - All classrooms
    - All toilets
    - Changing rooms
    - The library

- Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
  - Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted
  - If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified
  - If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
  - The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 12.3. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked after child, or has any special educational needs, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- 12.4. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- 12.5. The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary
- 12.6. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 12.7. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred
- 12.8. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Primary Behavioural Policy
- 12.9. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome

### **13. Children missing in Education (CME)**

- 13.1 Where a child is not attending school and no contact has been made with the parent or where the school believes the child may have moved and has not received notification from a parent, a school must act immediately to discover the child's whereabouts and ascertain they are safe. The headteacher and agencies involved with the school or 999999 young person must make every effort to gain information at the earliest opportunity. Factors in assessing risk are length of absence, level of concern and level of perceived risk to the pupil
- 13.2 Even without specific concerns the school MUST contact the Education Welfare Service (EWS) if a child's whereabouts are not known. EWS will make further contacts with other agencies such as Social Care, Local Housing Offices and Education Welfare Offices in possible destination location
- 13.3 It may be appropriate for agencies to approach possible sources of information such as relatives or neighbours. In cases where concern is specific, action to gain information and alert agencies and/or police must be swift in order to protect vulnerable parties
- 13.4 CME referrals will always be given a high level of priority by EWS. Investigations must be undertaken by both the school and the local authority (EWS) to try and trace the child. If the child is not found the EWS will advise the school to delete the pupils names from their registers and upload the pupils common transfer file (CTF) to the Lost Pupil Databases/ss2s site.

### **14. Religious observances**

- 14.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals
- 14.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance

### **15. Appointments**

- 15.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours
- 15.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office
- 15.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent/carer
- 15.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible



## **16. Young carers**

- 16.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers
- 16.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school
- 16.3. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate

## **17. Monitoring and review**

- 17.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year
- 17.2. Queensgate Foundation Primary School's attendance target is 96 percent
- 17.3. Details of our absence levels can be found on our website
- 17.4. This policy is reviewed every three years by the headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is July 2023
- 17.5. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents