



Attendance Policy

Introduction

The Old Post Office C.I.C. (the Organisation) is a not-for profit organisation which provides support for children, young people (and their families) who are struggling to attend mainstream education.

The Organisation is based at:

Springlands Farm, London Road, Mountfield, East Sussex. TN32 5LX.

The Organisation has adopted this 'Attendance Policy' and expects every adult representing the Organisation, to support and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all staff, volunteers and people using or renting the venue.

Purpose of the Policy

Our Organisation aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every child is supported to enable them to access the education to which they are entitled
- Offering support that aims to address patterns of absence.

We also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote punctuality in attending our sessions.

Our Organisation aims to:

- Identify barriers to learning which are preventing the child from attending school
- Support the student to re-engage with learning by identifying their interests and strengths
- Observe the student's needs and feedback any concerns that might need further assessment from external professionals
- Support the child to recognise their needs and find strategies that help them to learn
- Support the child with key skills that will help them to manage being in school
- Work with all stakeholders to understand the student's barriers to learning
- Work with all stakeholders to recognise strategies which support the student to access learning
- Use Boxall Profiling to assess and target any SEMH needs
- Make an assessment of the student's academic levels and gaps in their learning
- Make sure all students feel valued and help them to develop self-esteem
- Encourage attendance to every session

Our Organisation offers a place to re-engage with learning to students who are experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties which means that they are struggling to attend school full time;

this may be short term or long term. These children and young people (CYP) may be from the following categories:

- On placement with the aim of reintegration to the school that they are on roll with
- Funded to receive 'Education Other Than At/In School' (EOTA/IS)
- Currently Home Educated but still on roll, due to an inability to attend school due to anxiety/Emotionally based School Avoidance (EBSA)
- Removed from school and currently Home Educated due to bullying, school not able to meet needs, EBSA
- Currently Home Educated but looking for reintegration into an alternative/special school
- Currently Home Educated, but still on roll, unable to attend school and waiting assessment for Special Educational Needs, or Education, Health and Care Plan

Many learners whose parents bring them to our Organisation, or who are referred to us, have experienced poor levels of attendance in their mainstream school. This could be because of regular absence, because of frequent exclusions or maybe a combination of the two. Learners can have a poor attitude to school, and this can affect their level of attendance. Learners often find their transition to us difficult due to school-related trauma and this can have an effect on their level of attendance. We work to provide a 'soft landing' for all students, allowing them a very flexible provision and 'learning' opportunities until they have built a trusting relationship with our team. We recognise the importance of 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Need' and start all our work with a CYP by making sure they feel safe and happy, with all their sensory needs met; we then work on building a trusting relationship and identifying their needs and interests before we start to consider how we can support them to be able to learn again in a more formal setting.

Attendance matters to everyone. Non-attendance affects not only the individual child and their family, but it has a significant effect on educational progress, and the wider community. Regular attendance matters to employers because it influences young people's expectations of work. Irregular attendance leads to poorer personal, social and life skills and has been shown to be linked to a lower likelihood of obtaining a job and of remaining in long-term employment.

Non-attendance exposes children to risks and dangers, sometimes with costly or even tragic results for themselves or others.

Our Organisation emphasises the importance of partnership between us, the school and parents / guardians. Without mutual support for each other, the impact on the child's progress will be minimised. Parents will be invited to be involved with every aspect of our provision. We also feel that it is important that the CYP's voice is heard, and they too will be involved in decision making.

All learners accessing provision through our organisation will be dual registered on referral from the school at which they are mainly registered. Dual registration means that they will have:

- A current main school – the school they are registered at
- An alternative provision

The status of the main and subsidiary is not a reflection of the number of sessions spent at each establishment, it reflects what has been agreed for the pupil when the agreement was put in place. The CYP continues to be on roll at the main establishment. A CYP may receive alternative provision with us due to social and emotional needs, and they will receive an appropriately tailored approach.

The main school should ensure that:

- They have a named contact for the parents/pupils

- The pupil remains part of their community
- They send newsletters home
- The pupil receives the same opportunities as their peers
- Access to schoolwork is offered if requested by parents/pupils
- Pupils and parents can come into school periodically, either inside or outside school hours
- They maintain regular contact with the alternative provision
- They share information with the alternative provision – particularly in relation to safeguarding
- The main school will be responsible for the decision on whether parents should be reimbursed for travel expenses to our venue.

The alternative provision will:

- Maintain regular contact with the main school
- Share important information with the main school – particularly in relation to safeguarding
- Work with the pupil to build up skills and strategies needed for them to return to their main school
- Work with the pupil to identify additional barriers to learning and feed these back to the school in weekly reports

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Principles

- Pupils will receive 1-1 tuition to ensure they are provided with differentiated and quality learning experiences and materials to ensure they have every opportunity to reach their full potential as defined in agreement with all stakeholders.

- Pupils with learning difficulties and those who need special support will receive this support in a sensitive way within the learning environment
- Pupils will spend four hours at the organisation with us each week; this is less than the nationally recommended time of 25 hours a week. The main school will decide whether their timetable is reduced on a time-limited basis, and they will review this regularly. The local authority will be informed by the main school of any part-time timetable arrangements.
- The lead tutor at the Organisation will contact the parents on each day that the pupil is absent, unless they have had prior notification that they will be absent on a particular day. In order for this to be effective, the Organisation must have up to date information, including daytime phone numbers, email addresses and mobile numbers.
- The Organisation must be informed of any absence by 10am on the day of the session. If a pupil does not arrive for their session at the agreed time, the lead tutor will phone the parent after 10 minutes. The lead tutor will endeavour to inform the school within half an hour of the session start time if the pupil does not arrive.
- If a pupil attends a session, the designated person at the school will be sent an email by the assistant teacher to confirm their attendance.
- If a pupil is solely registered on the roll of the local authority, and attendance has been a concern, we will ask for support and advice from the Education Welfare Service.
- Where pupils are accruing an unacceptable number of unauthorised absences, the Organisation will ask the main school to issue a warning letter under their terms regarding attendance.
- The school will be responsible for deciding if an absence comes under the DfE guidance on school attendance as acceptable or unacceptable.

Registration

The Organisation will keep an attendance register (Appendix A) which will close 10 minutes after the session is due to start. The attendance register will mark the pupil as follows:

- Attending
- Not attending due to a reason authorised/known to the main school
- Absent

When a child is marked 'absent', the reason given by the parent will be noted and shared with the school; it is the main school's responsibility to decide whether an absence should be 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

Attendance issues will be discussed at meetings between the stakeholders and the lead tutor can be asked to attend formal attendance meetings at the school if it is felt appropriate.

The main school is responsible for marking the pupil's attendance onto their school systems in the way that they feel is most appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

The Organisation's lead teacher will:

- Phone parents if the child has not arrived 10 minutes after the session starts
- Record the reasons for non-attendance

- Contact the designated person at the main school to inform them as soon as possible of the pupil's non-attendance and reasons (within 30 minutes if possible)
- Record attendance on the pupil's file

The Organisation's assistant teacher will:

- Email the designated person at the main school if the pupil arrives on time

The main school's Headteacher is:

- Responsible for ensuring their policy regarding attendance is implemented, monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and reported to governors
- Responsible for issuing penalties where appropriate

The main school's designated person will:

- Liaise with the Headteacher to agree the alternative provision and any deviation from the usual timetable
- Be a point of contact for the Organisation to feedback attendance and any associated concerns
- Monitors concerns about attendance
- Decide whether an absence should be authorised

The register will be kept with the pupils file by the Organisation until the provision has ended; at this point, the file will be passed to the main school.

Interrelationships with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following other important policies:

- Data Protection Policy / Privacy Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

This policy is approved and robustly endorsed by The Old Post Office Wellbeing Hub/Organisation and is due for renewal every year.

Signed Anita Auer Mrs Anita Auer (Safeguarding Officer)

Signed Paul Auer Mr Paul Auer (Director)

Date: 24.6.24

Review Date: 24.6.25

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