

Sheridan School

'A unique service for unique young people'

Attendance Procedure

Sheridan School

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Attendance Procedure

Procedure Purpose

The purpose of the procedure is to provide an agreed and consistently applied framework within which attendance at Sheridan School can be managed. The procedure aims to help ensure that all students attend both regularly and punctually and ensures that attendance matters are monitored and responded to. The procedure further provides for the active investigation and follow-up of all unexplained and questionable absenteeism.

Statement of Intent

Sheridan School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

Good attendance is important in promoting good mental wellbeing. Missing lessons, falling behind and not being included in activities to promote healthy minds and bodies, all contribute towards a student's anxieties.

Registers and Registration

Registers are maintained in accordance with DFE and Local Authority guidance. Registration opens at 9.00am and closes at 9.30am. Students who arrive at the school after 9.30am will be classified as late and an entry to signify this will be made in the register. Afternoon registration opens at 12.15pm and closes at 12.45pm. A paper register will be completed by Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) at the gate and transferred to Engage at 9.30am by Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner). If Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) is absent from school then this will be completed by Vicki Fusco (Assistant Headteacher).

Authorised / Unauthorised Absence

All Students absences will be categorised as either authorised or unauthorised. An absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation is received with the request from the student's parent/carer. If no request and explanation is received or if the explanation is not deemed satisfactory then the absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

Procedures for Following-up Absenteeism.

All parents/carers are requested to ensure that if a student is absent from school they should contact the school as soon as possible – preferably on the first morning of any absence.

If a student has not arrived by the end of the period set aside for registration and no explanation has been received from the student's parent/carer, then a phone call will be made by Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) to student's parent/carer to elicit the reason for the absence. If there is no response to the initial phone call further calls will be attempted during the day. If Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) is absent from school then this will be completed by Maria Ramos (Admin Department).

If a student arrives after registration and school staff have reason to believe that the student's parents / carer is unaware of the lateness, then a phone call will be made by Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) in order to make the parent/carer aware. If Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) is absent from school then this will be completed by Maria Ramos (Admin Department).

Should a parent/carer persistently fail to comply with the school's procedures on notification of absence the Head of School will write to that parent/carer to remind them of their responsibilities.

Safeguarding and Attendance

School absenteeism is a safeguarding concern and therefore the following process will be followed for students who are not attending and/or no reason has been provided for an absence and/or it has not been possible to speak to parent/carer to ascertain the reasoning behind the absence.

- If your child is absent from school and we have not been informed as to why, a welfare telephone call will be made at the close of registration (9.30am) by Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner)
- If it has not been possible to speak to a parent/carer to ascertain the reasoning behind the absence, then a second telephone call will be made at the close of afternoon registration.
- If it has not been possible to speak to a parent/carer after the second telephone call and your child is absent from school again the following morning a third welfare telephone call will be made at the close of morning registration.
- On the morning of the third day of absence if it has not been possible to make contact with a parent/carer then an unannounced welfare visit/check will be conducted that day by a member of staff. This visit will be conducted by a trained DSO within school where possible.
- If upon the welfare visit/check, there is no response and/or the member of staff visiting has concerns as to the welfare of the child then the member of staff will return to school and will contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) to raise a safeguarding concern.
- If your family has a social worker assigned, Amber Browne (Positive Behaviour Support Practitioner) or Vicki Fusco (assistant Headteacher) will contact them on the first day of absence to inform them of the reason for absence.

Procedures for Monitoring Attendance

The Assistant Headteacher will regularly inspect the registers to identify emerging patterns of absenteeism. Any such patterns will be discussed at team meetings and appropriate support strategies will be put in place.

It will be the responsibility of all the school staff to ensure that the importance of regular and punctual attendance is continuously stressed to the students and that appropriate supportive strategies are used with students who may experience attendance difficulties.

Staff at Sheridan School will liaise with parent/carers and if assigned the student's social worker where appropriate, to ensure that support is given to parents/carers where necessary. In the event of persistent absences, a meeting will be called between all relevant agencies to discuss the issue and related concerns.

For students whose attendance falls below 90% and it is viewed this is likely to continue and it is not a 'short term' drop in attendance, then an attendance warning letter will be sent. If attendance fails to improve over a period of three weeks then an attendance meeting will be arranged to complete an Early Intervention Attendance Plan Meeting to discuss any barriers to pupils attendance and further support that can be offered by the school. This will be devised in conjunction with parents/carers and the student concerned.

If attendance fails to improve after the Early Intervention Attendance Plan, a second review meeting will be held. If there is still no improvement in attendance, the fast track process will be started in accordance with the Norfolk County Council Attendance Policy.

Joint Medical Protocol

If your child is absent from school for re-occurring or prolonged illness and/or medical appointments, Sheridan School will apply for consent to share information with medical professionals in order to support your child and the family to access school more frequently.

Legal action to enforce school attendance

Local Authorities and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason:

Parenting Order
Education Supervision Order
School Attendance Order
Penalty notice

You can be given one or more of these orders, but the Local Authority does not have to do this before prosecuting you.

Parenting Order

This means you must go to parenting classes. You will also have to abide by what the court says to improve your child's school attendance.

Education Supervision Order

If the Local Authority thinks you need support getting your child to go to school but you are not co-operating, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order.

An attendance supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The Local Authority can do this instead of prosecuting you, or as well.

School Attendance Order

You will get a School Attendance Order if the Local Authority thinks your child is not receiving an education. You have 15 days to provide evidence that you have registered your child with a school or that you are giving them home education.

The order will require you to send your child to a specific school. If you do not, you may be prosecuted.

Penalty notice

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Instead of being prosecuted, you can be given a penalty notice. The penalty is £60, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If you do not pay the fine, you may be prosecuted.

Prosecution

You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives you a Parenting Order.