



## **Whole-School Attendance Policy**

### **Aims:**

The school recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy is therefore to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance for individuals, groups and the student body as a whole.

In order to achieve this, all members of the school community have an important contribution to make.

### **The Policy aims to:**

- Improve the overall percentage attendance of students at Poltair.
- Raise the profile of attendance and make it a priority for staff, students, parents and governors.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate guidance and support for parents, students and staff.
- Develop and monitor clear procedure for maintaining accurate registers and for registering students during each lesson using lesson monitor
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data in order to target attendance related issues.
- Develop a framework within which all staff can work to provide a consistent approach to raising levels of attendance throughout the school.
- Ensure that the school has an effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other relevant agencies.

### **Links to Other Policies:**

This Policy is linked to the Teaching and Learning Policy, the school's Anti-bullying strategies and the Behaviour Management Policy.

### **Policy Outline**

#### **Encouraging good attendance for all:**

- The accompanying Guidelines provide detail of strategies for raising levels of attendance. All staff should ensure that these are followed.
- Roles and responsibilities for each member of staff are clearly indicated in the Guidelines.
- An appropriate curriculum, including the use of alternative provision for some students, is essential and will be kept under constant review.
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school if we are to encourage good attendance is recognised.
- Students are provided with appropriate support so that problems do not drive them away from school. The school's approach to bullying is of particular significance here. Where problems outside school are identified as having an impact on a student's attendance, an appropriate level of multi-agency support will be developed.

- Students with Special Educational Needs are identified and given appropriate support.
- Effective partnership with parents through regular contact and support is provided. Parents are kept informed of their child's attendance through first day contact, through letters of praise and concern and through individual interviews when appropriate.
- Parents are actively discouraged from taking students away from school during term-time for holiday or other purposes.
- A comprehensive system of rewards for good attendance is used.
- Attendance is given a high profile within the school including through assemblies, tutor programme and the school newsletter, Spotlight.
- Appropriate displays during Parents' Evenings and other events further help to raise the profile of attendance.
- Governors are encouraged to play an active role in raising levels of attendance, and are kept informed of attendance issues through governors linked to behaviour and attendance.
- Punctuality is highlighted as an important issue through the use of appropriate sanctions.

#### **Identifying and Tackling Poor Attendance:**

- Attendance levels for individuals, form groups, year groups and the whole school are carefully monitored and action taken to address poor attendance at each of these levels.
- Attendance levels of other groups of students, such as boys and girls, those from an ethnic minority background, students in receipt of the pupil premium and those with Special Educational Needs are carefully monitored and action is taken to address significant differences.
- The school seeks to address patterns of non-attendance, for example at particular times in the week or from particular subjects.
- Long-term absentees are offered and provided with appropriate support to enable them to make a positive return to school.
- Early identification of potential poor attendees is part of the school's primary liaison work during transition.
- Attendance Improvement Meetings at Poltair –provide targeted strategies for students with poor attendance, students with deteriorating attendance and potential poor attendees.
- Attendance panels, involving Year Team Leaders, members of the school's Senior Leadership Team, governors and the Education Welfare Officer, are used to encourage and support parents.
- Other support strategies for parents, including advice clinics on attendance issues, are provided.
- Effective partnership with the Education Welfare Officer is central to improving attendance and close communication between the EWO and the school is carefully maintained.

**Conclusion:**

A range of strategies designed to tackle poor attendance is only a part of the school's approach to this issue. Whole-school issues such as providing effective pastoral support and effective teaching and learning are recognised as having a direct impact upon attendance.

## Guidelines for Implementation of the Whole-School Attendance Policy

### 1. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 1.1 Class Teachers

- Ensure that all students within lessons are able to access the learning through a range of teaching and learning strategies in line with the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.
- Ensure that underachieving students within each class are identified and raised as concerns through progress review meetings with subject line managers.
- Ensure that the electronic register is completed accurately in each lesson. *If, in rare circumstances, the electronic register cannot be taken during the lesson, this must be done as soon as possible and by the end of the session at the latest.*
- Identify, within each lesson, any students who clearly should be present in the lesson but are not. Inform [awol@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:awol@poltair.cornwall.sch.uk) if students are not present. Guidance has been sent to staff and students have had this talked through in Assemblies (September 2017)
- Monitor carefully the attendance of individuals within a class and alert their subject leader and appropriate Year Team Leaders where patterns of non-attendance are detected.
- When a student is known to have truanted from your lesson, follow this up by making sure they have caught up the missed work as part of behaviour reparation.
- Ensure that appropriate work is set and marked for long-term absentees on agreed reintegration plans so that the return to school is made as easy as possible.
- Ensure that those who return from long-term absence are provided with appropriate support to enable them to access the learning within the lesson.
- Actively discourage any adverse comments about the absence from other students within the class. Welcome back students from long term absence in a professional manner avoiding reference to the absence in front of other students.

## 1.2 The Form Tutor

- Ensure that registers for morning sessions are accurately completed and maintained. A warning bell signals at 8.33am every morning and so registers must be taken at 8:35 and students who arrive after 8.35 must be marked late. A misconduct will be issued for this. Register is closed at 9am.
- Take action to “chase” absence notes from returning students. Where absence notes are not provided within a week of the absence in spite of your actions, alert the Behaviour and Attendance Secretary and inform her of the action you have already taken.
- Collect and scrutinise absence notes and alert Year Team Leaders if professional judgement suggests that these are forged. Tackle any instances of inappropriate absence with the student and alert the Behaviour and Attendance Secretary so that parental contact can be made.
- Keep registers up to date with reasons for absence when received. This can be done by adding a comment to SIMS.
- Share fortnightly, the attendance of each individual student. This should be recorded in the Student Planner.
- Encourage good attendance through constant reinforcement of individual and class targets and through encouraging students to want to be the best attending form in the year group.
- Monitor attendance within the form and use short-term attendance reports and targets where you feel there is deterioration.
- Keep the Tutor Monitoring Log updated with actions taken to support and challenge attendance. This is a key communication tool between the Form Tutor and Year Team Leaders.

### **1.3 Year Team Leaders**

- Monitor carefully the attendance of students within the Year group, taking note of any patterns amongst students from particular groups, particular times of the week or particular subject areas. Inform SLT of identified patterns.
- Carry out Attendance Improvement Meetings (AIMs) where a student's attendance is not improving. Set targets for the student in accordance with agreed guidance.
- Make referrals to the Education Welfare Officer when poor attendance is persistent and not improving.
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer to ensure that students with poor attendance are receiving appropriate levels of support.
- Monitor the attendance rates of forms within the Year group, taking action alongside form tutors where particular forms are identified as having poor attendance.
- Monitor particularly closely the attendance of those with deteriorating levels of attendance, those with attendance between 80% and 90% and those at risk of disaffection, using short-term targets and attendance reports as necessary
- Foster a positive attitude to school attendance within the Year Group through assemblies and constant reinforcement with students. Encourage a spirit of healthy competition between forms and individuals.
- Liaise with subject teachers to ensure that appropriate work is set for long-term absentees and those excluded from school.
- Work with the Education Welfare Officer to identify ways in which long-term absentees can be reintegrated effectively.
- Implement sanctions where there have been instances of truancy, whether from individual lessons or whole days.
- Keep form tutors informed of action taken in relation to particular students.

#### **1.4 Assistant Headteacher i/c Attendance and Behaviour**

- Liaise with Year Team Leaders to identify students who require intervention from the Education Welfare Officer
- Organise and take part in Education Planning Meetings (EPMs) as required.
- Provide line management for the Year Team Leaders and Education Welfare Officer ensuring that there is good communication between both parties.
- Oversee, monitor and evaluate attendance
- Using attendance data, analyse this for patterns of poor attendance amongst particular year groups or other groups of students and take action to address any anomalies.
- Oversee the efficient running of lesson monitor system and take action where registers are not being completed accurately.
- Organise parent support events on attendance.
- Take a lead in promoting the need for good attendance through assemblies tutor programme and work with staff and students.
- Decide upon new admissions and decide upon any initial action to be taken to encourage good attendance.
- With the rest of SLT, actively discourage parents from taking students out of school during term-time.
- With the Year Team Leaders, the Attendance and EWO identify Year 6 students for targeted support on attendance at transition from primary school.

### **1.5 Behaviour and Attendance Secretary**

- Operate personal first day calls as a follow up to texting parents of students with unsatisfactory attendance or where truancy is suspected.
- Use attendance data to identify patterns and trends of attendance. For other year groups, working with the Year Team Leaders to identify students for support and close monitoring.
- Investigate instances of suspected whole-day or lesson truancy and take appropriate action, including making initial contact with parents and informing the Year Team Leaders.
- Work closely with parents of targeted students to provide support and pressure to get students to return to school.
- Contact parents where absences have remained unexplained despite the intervention of the form tutor.
- Liaise with Year Team Leaders and use attendance data to identify students for referral to the EWO.
- Administer lesson monitor, noting where registers have not been completed or have not been completed accurately and taking appropriate action.
- Ensure that the school's official registers are in line with legal requirements and that any anomalies are reported to SLT.

### **1.6 Education Engagement Manager (EEM)**

- Analyse fortnightly data to identify students who are persistent absentees or in danger of becoming a persistent absentee.
- Identify and manage a workable case load of students
- Work with targeted students to improve attendance through parental contact, attendance reports, short-term targets and rewards. Particular attention will be paid to students with attendance below 85%
- Work with Year Team Leaders to involve outside agencies with individuals and groups of students.
- Administer the attendance rewards systems, liaising closely with Year Team Leaders.
- Take part in targeted tutor work directed at groups of poor attendees.
- Take the lead on Education Planning Meetings
- Keep in contact with long-term absentees and liaise with Year Team Leaders to ensure that effective reintegration strategies are used, identifying "catch up" needs.
- Prepare cases for prosecution.

### **What happens when a student's attendance is below national standards?**

1. When a student's attendance falls below 97%, we will write to parents and carers to make them aware of this fact.
2. Should a student's attendance continue to fall, the student, parents/carers and Year Team Leaders will meet for an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) to discuss how the school can best support the student in raising their attendance. Targets will be set for a four week period. If the student meets their targets, they will be rewarded.
3. Following the AIM meeting, should a student's attendance still continue to fall, parents/carers will be invited to a formal Education Planning Meeting (EPM). Again, support will be offered and targets will be set.
4. Should attendance remain below 90%, the school will make a referral to the local authority to begin legal proceedings.