

|                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Person responsible for the Policy: | Fiona Moores  |
| Date Approved:<br>Approved by HT   | November 2020 |
| Date for Review:                   | January 2023  |

| Changes since last review |   |
|---------------------------|---|
|                           | - |
|                           |   |

| Introduction   |
|--|
| <p>The Quinta Primary School recognises the importance of good attendance and the significance of attendance on safeguarding, wellbeing and achievement.</p> <p>We aim to achieve excellent attendance for all pupils by operating an attendance policy within which pupils, staff, parents, the local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.</p> <p>All staff will encourage excellent attendance. Excellent attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.</p> |

| Key adults responsible for promoting excellent attendance at The Quinta |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Fiona Moores  | Attendance Officer        |
| William Sharpe  | Designated Safeguard Lead |

## **RATIONALE**

- Regular attendance at school or alternative provision is a legal requirement and “The Education Act” 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent/carer to fail to secure their child’s regular attendance at school.
- Parent/carers/guardians have a legal duty as well as a moral obligation to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on time, on a regular and full-time basis.
- Good attendance and punctuality is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills which will equip them for life.
- Safeguarding each child is everyone’s responsibility and a child may be at risk if they do not attend school regularly.
- Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

## **Aims**

- To create a culture in which good attendance is ‘normality’
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s), carer(s), guardian(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions

## **Objectives**

- To involve the children or young people more in their school attendance
- All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children or young people’s attendance and for the school to recognise the importance of this role, especially with identifying first day absence of pupils.
- Effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service
- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring information
- To discuss the settings of targets for the school with the EWO and the Governing Body as appropriate
- To ensure that such data collated on Arbor is used effectively by all staff in conjunction with the Head Teacher to address individual children’s needs where they fall below 90%.
- To keep parent(s), carer(s), guardian(s) and governors informed of policy and practice e.g. school website, school newsletter or seesaw. To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for some vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children.

## **Procedure:**

- Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
  - - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
  - - Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)
- It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s), guardian(s) will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent **on the first day** the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, text, personally at the office or by appointment.
- If contact, explaining the child or young person’s absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian (s), then the school will contact the home by telephone on

the initial day and on each day thereafter until the unexplained absence is clarified.  
**This contact will be recorded within Arbor - the schools MIS System.**

- The headteacher will regularly remind parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- We also celebrate 100% attendance at the end of the school year on the school report.

#### **What can parent(s)/carer(s) do to help?**

- If your child is absent from school please contact the school **before 9am** (prior to the close of morning registration) on the day of absence so that we know your child is safe. If your child is likely to be absent for any length of time, (e.g. due to illness) please keep us informed, a **medical note will be requested if the absence is over a week.**
- Try to make appointments outside school time, appointment letters will be required if in the school day.
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary

#### **Identification of Pupils Giving Cause for Concern & Referral**

- Mrs F Moores monitors attendance regularly and has responsibility for identifying attendance concerns.
- If the class teacher has concerns around attendance they will raise this with Mrs Moores immediately.
- Mrs F Moores will contact parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) and follow this up with attendance letters (Appendix 1, as appropriate). The child's attendance will then be monitored to the end of the half term/term.
- If there is no improvement, over this time period, attendance letter 2 (Appendix 2) will be sent to parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s). Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) will be invited into school if they wish to discuss any problems/issues their child/children may have with Mrs Moores and Mr Sharpe.
- If there is no improvement, at this point, attendance letter 3 (Appendix 3) will be sent to parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s). This will inform them that the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service, if there has been no improvement in attendance (Attendance Letter 2 in Appendix 2). The referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form (see Referral Form in Appendix 5), copies of all correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate from Arbor data base
- If attendance has improved to the end of half term/term, school will still continue to monitor attendance to ensure improvement is maintained.

#### **Completing the Register**

- The Governing Body is responsible for registering with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998
- Electronic registers can be printed out and kept in the same way as manual registers.  
**These are legal documents as is the electronic recording of attendance**
- The twice-daily requirement to register pupils formally receives children or young people from home **and is a legal requirement**
- Emphasis is placed on the accurate twice daily completion of registers by the class teachers in the classrooms.
- Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school
- Registers will be marked electronically.
- The register will be marked using the symbols advised by the Department of Education.

## **Lateness**

School begins at 8.55am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. **The school gates are open from 8.45am onwards.** Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action will be taken. See Identification of Pupils Giving Cause for Concern and Referrals – the same process will apply (See Appendix 4)

## **Leave of Absence during term time**

**Under the present legislation parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday. A request for leave of absence must still be completed by Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s), these can be obtained from school and have to be requested, as they are not readily available.** A request for a leave of absence **must** be made by the parent who the pupil normally resides with. A child or young person who is absent longer than 10 days after an agreed return date can legally be removed from the school roll and the parents/carers/guardian(s) may be liable to prosecution.

A child cannot have more than five days (10 Sessions) of unauthorised absence over the course of two consecutive half-terms. Fines may be issued by the Local Authority in these cases.

There may be exceptional circumstances where authorised leave of absence is granted, the Governing body will consider each case individually, taking into account a child or young person's overall attendance and the reason for the absence. The Headteacher has been delegated this responsibility by the governing body.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM**

This is available from the School Office upon request. It must be completed in advance of the absence and returned to the school.

- It must clearly state on the form why it is necessary that this absence must be taken in term time.
- Lower cost/Holiday is not a reason.
- On receipt of the "Leave of Absence Request Form", you will be sent a response indicating whether the governing body is able to authorise your request or not.

*Reasons for not authorising it may include:-*

- Unsatisfactory attendance
- Time of year, e.g. if pupils are sitting Public Examinations
- If leave of absence has already been authorised during the current academic year
- It is a holiday request in school term time
- There does not appear to be an exceptional circumstance surrounding the request

**Examples** of exceptional circumstances are seen to be:

- Holidays requested for children whose parents may be in the Police Force/Farming Industry.
- being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time,
- when a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue (evidence required)
- The wedding/funeral of an immediate family member or the birth of a sibling

- When a family celebrates their cultural heritage and identity and falls during term time.

While decisions are to be made on a case by case basis, requests will ***normally be refused***.

If parents, contrary to what the governors have said, still decide to take their child out of school, then the absence will be coded as “**unauthorised**”. This may lead to the school referring the matter to the Local Authority requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

| <b>Penalties for unauthorised absence</b> |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Timeline</b>                           | <b>One child</b>   | <b>Two Children</b>  |
| Paid within 21 days                       | £60 per parent as per the definition in the education act, section 576   | £60 per child = £120 per parent  |
| After 21 days and before 28 days          | £120 per parent  | £120 per child = £240 per parent   |
| After 28 days                             | A summons to appear before the Magistrates’ Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child’s regular attendance | A summons to appear before the Magistrates’ Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child’s regular attendance |

***Fixed Penalty Notices have been introduced as part of the Government’s drive to improve attendance.***

These measures are severe but we believe that regular and high attendance is in every pupil’s best interests and helps to maximise their achievements and enjoyment of school.

This Policy reflects accurately the current legislation and as a school, we have a duty to point this out to parents/carers/guardians.

Further details and background information can be found at the Cheshire East Council website – [http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/education\\_and\\_learning/schools/parents.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/education_and_learning/schools/parents.aspx).

## **LEAVING SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

A child will only be permitted to leave school during school hours if permission has been sought and a parent, carer, guardian or designated person collects the child in person. You will be asked to sign your child in/out of school accordingly for safeguarding and health and safety reasons.

- **The school aims to have ALL children or young people attending regularly and punctually and parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) need to know that should their child fail to attend in this way then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.**
- **Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) need to be aware that Cheshire East Schools work in co-operation with the Education Welfare Service.**
- **Parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) need to be aware that Cheshire East Council in conjunction with Schools are operating Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance.**

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire East is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice, which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority. This aims to improve the attainment of minority pupils across Cheshire East. Schools are aware and take into account the need for all public authorities to re-examine and make changes to their practice in promoting genuine multi-racial partnership.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.

## **MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE**

### **Local Authority Monitoring of Attendance**

There are a range of processes to support Local Authority monitoring of attendance:

- All schools have a statutory obligation to provide information about attendance to the LA and the DfE via the school census returns. This enables national comparisons.
- The development of Electronic Registration means that the Local Authority should be able to access attendance data centrally, and could therefore monitor trends.
- The Education Welfare Service monitors attendance on behalf of the Local Authority through regular meetings with school staff and regular register checks. This focuses particularly on children or young people with long-term absences, regular patterns of absence, the school's monitoring of student attendance at alternative provision such as college placements, return of children or young people after fixed term exclusions, admissions of children or young people for whom a place at the school has been agreed, children or young people cared for by the Local Authority.
- Monitoring of agreed School/Education Welfare Service School Action Plans to ensure priority concerns are effectively addressed. The Education Welfare Officer and school must regularly review the Action Plans jointly.
- Monitoring the use and success of legal action to enforce attendance.
- The Admissions Team has a protocol for referral to the Education Welfare Service of children or young people who, for whatever reason, are without a school place.

### **School Monitoring of Attendance**

Every school must have a designated person responsible for attendance, and establish a routine that ensures that regular monitoring and review take place.

#### **General**

| <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Action</b>   |
|------------------|---|
| Daily            | Class teacher has initial responsibility for dealing with concerns. |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Weekly | Action to be taken by the school with regard to children or young people whose absence is causing concern. Discussions with the Education Welfare Officer, who may be asked to intervene in cases where the school has not been able to ascertain reasons for absence, or where other concerns exist. |
|--------|---|

### Specific

The Quinta Primary allocate overall responsibility for specific tasks to the Headteacher (the deputy in his absence) who works alongside the school's administration officer for attendance.

| Group       | Issues  |
|-------------|---|
| Year Group  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare figures with those for other cohorts within the school</li> <li>• Consider attendance pattern over the year.</li> </ul>  |
| Class Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare group with others in the same year group</li> <li>• Consider if registration guidelines are being correctly applied</li> <li>• Consider the class teacher effect</li> </ul>  |
| Individuals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for broken weeks – five separate one-day absences are more significant than a week's absence</li> <li>• Look for same day absence each week</li> <li>• Check reasons for absence</li> <li>• Check absence notes</li> <li>• Closely monitor vulnerable/"at risk" children or young people</li> <li>• Reward good/improved attendance</li> <li>• Report to Education Welfare Officer long-term absentees/those for whom no reason for absence has been received.</li> </ul> |

### School Monitoring of Lateness

The major principles of any late monitoring system are:

- it should ensure everyone in school is recorded in case of fire
- it should not allow children or young people to come into school undetected especially if some form of same day contact is being made with absentees.

#### The School's signing in system:

- enables the school office to keep a record and monitor punctuality
- makes it difficult for a student to enter a classroom late without staff acknowledgement
- ensures all teachers are consistently and correctly coding registers.

### Every Minute Counts

**Lateness = Lost Learning**  
(Figures below are calculated over a school year)

|                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 5 minutes late each day  | 3 days lost!   |
| 10 minutes late each day | 6.5 days lost! |
| 15 minutes late each day | 10 days lost!  |
| 20 minutes late each day | 13 days lost!  |
| 30 minutes late each day | 19 days lost!  |

## Appendix 1

### Notice to improve: Cause for concern - Attendance

Dear xxxxxx,

I'm writing to express my concern at [name's] recent high levels of absence from school.

Their current monthly average attendance has fallen to xx%. Falling below 95% attendance will likely have an impact on their academic achievement.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular



attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We want to make sure that we can support [name's] education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help them to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored over the next 4 weeks and I will be compiling a report to share with our headteacher.

The outcomes of the review may result in the following actions:

- No further action due to significant improvement
- a face to face meeting with myself (senior attendance officer)
- a face to face meeting with myself and the headteacher
- a referral to Cheshire East Welfare
- a fixed penalty notice

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Fiona Moores

Senior Attendance Officer

Appendix 2

Dear xxxxxx,

Despite my recent letter dated xx.xx.xx, your child's absence has not improved. Therefore I am now writing to issue a formal notice of attendance concern. Included in this letter are the findings from the recent review and the action plan we will be formulating.

It is imperative that xxxxx attends school regularly as their social , emotional and academic development is significantly affected by poor absence.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509679/The-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-KS2-and-KS4-2013-to-2014-academic-year.pdf)

Between the dates xxx - xxx your child's absence was xx%

Between the review period xx-xx your child's absence was xx%

As a result your child's overall absence is now xx%

I would like to invite you to a meeting within the next 10 days to discuss ways forward, identify ways to support you in improving your child's attendance and collaboratively develop an action plan to improve.

Please call the school as soon as possible to arrange a date for this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Fiona Moores

Senior Attendance Officer

Dear Parent,

During our monitoring of attendance this term ..... attendance is showing a cause for concern. The school records show that to date her attendance is ..... The aim is for all children to have at least 95% attendance.

Regular attendance at school is vital if children or young people are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers.

We will continue to monitor attendance, and hope to see an improvement in the coming month. If there are particular problems, which we might help with, or if the school nurse could be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact either your child's class teacher or myself.

Yours sincerely,

Mr W Sharpe  
Headteacher

## Cc Attendance Registration Certificate

Appendix 2

Dear Parent,

Your child/children's attendance is showing a cause for concern again. The school records show that to date ..... attendance is ..... As I have previously explained, the aim is for all children to have at least 95% attendance.

Regular attendance at school is vital if children or young people are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers.

If there are particular problems, which we might help with, or if the school nurse could be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact either your child's class teacher or myself to arrange a suitable appointment for you to come into school.

Mr W Sharpe  
Headteacher

Cc Attendance Registration Certificate/s

Appendix 3

Dear Parent,

Further to my recent letter, continued monitoring shows that there has not been sufficient improvement in your child/children's attendance.

Unfortunately due to this, I will have to refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer at Cheshire East Council

As I have previously explained, the aim is for all children to have at least 95% attendance.

It is important that your child attends school regularly in order to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers.

It is also your legal duty to ensure your child's regular attendance at school and failure to this could result in legal action being taken against you.

Yours sincerely,

Mr W Sharpe  
Headteacher

Cc Attendance Registration Certificate/s

Appendix 4

**Child's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class** \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent,

Your child's punctuality is currently giving cause for concern.

Late arrivals at school result in children or young people missing the beginning of lessons and disturbing the rest of the class when they arrive. All children or young

people are expected to arrive in school between (time) and (time) every day. Please make sure that your child arrives at the correct time.

We will continue to monitor punctuality, and hope to see an immediate and sustained improvement. If there are particular problems, which we might help with, please do not hesitate to contact either your child's teacher or myself.

Yours sincerely,

Mr W Sharpe  
Headteacher

Cc Attendance Registration certificate/s

Appendix 5

**Education Welfare Service**

**FIXED PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST**

**For Unauthorised Leave of Absence**

**Registered pupil at:**

.....School

**Pupil Details:**

Name: .....MALE/FEMALE    D.O.B:

.....

Address:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....Postcode:

.....

**Parent/Carer (please delete one)**

Name:

.....

Address (if different from above):

.....

.....

.....

.....Postcode:

.....

Telephone No: ..... Mobile No:

.....

Name:

.....

Address (if different from above):

.....

.....

.....

.....Postcode:

.....

Telephone No: ..... Mobile No:

.....

### Dates of Absence

The above named pupil was absent from school on the following dates:

.....

.....

.....

and this absence is recorded in the school register as unauthorised. (Please attach a registration certificate showing the period.)

### Declaration

I am the Head Teacher/Acting Head Teacher of the School named. I certify that this leave of absence request has been considered in line with the School Attendance Policy. To the best of my knowledge there are no exceptional circumstances.

Did parents request authorisation prior to leave of absence?

Yes / No.

Did school respond in writing declining application?

**Yes / No**

**PLEASE ATTACH COPIES OF ALL PAPERWORK.**

- Copy of newsletter detailing FPN information and charges
- Copy of leave of absence application
- Copy of letter declining application
- Pupil attendance certificate

Name: .....

Signature .....Date: .....

Please send this form fully completed to :

FPN Administrator, Education Welfare Services, Cheshire East Council, Floor 2, Delamere House,  
c/o Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ