

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER & CATEGORY	QSC/4	Quality & Standards Committee
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RATIFYING COMMITTEE	Trustee Board Meeting	
DATE RATIFIED	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2017	
ANTICIPATED REVIEW DATE:	June 2018	
POLICY LEAD	Tamra Bradbury	
POLICY AUTHOR (if different from above)		

## POLICY CONTEXT

- Focus School Cambridge Campus' Attendance Policy aims to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all students. Regular attendance at school is key to steady student progress and enjoyment of learning and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

## POLICY REQUIREMENT (see Section 2)

- The law requires regular attendance by students registered at Focus School Cambridge Campus. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure attendance.
- The campus has a duty to inform the Local Authority at agreed intervals, of the name and address of any registered student who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent for a continuous period of 10 or more school days unless certain criteria are met as set out in the policy

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Rationale

- 1.1.1 At Focus School Cambridge Campus, we stress the importance of good attendance and the Focus Attendance Policy fosters this commitment.
- 1.1.2 The Campus owes a duty of care to both parents and students to ensure that all students attend regularly; there is also a moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- 1.1.3 Schools are required to keep Admission Registers and Attendance Registers by law. They can be kept in hard copy or electronic form, this Policy and procedure advises how they should be kept.

## 1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 This Policy applies to all Staff, Trustees, Students, Parents and Guardians.

## 1.3 Principles

- 1.3.1 Focus School Cambridge Campus' Attendance Policy aims to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all students. Regular attendance at school is key to steady student progress and enjoyment of learning and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as much as is possible.
- 1.3.2 Focus School Cambridge Campus takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, students and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.
- 1.3.3 Our aim is to have a minimum attendance level of 95%.

# 2 POLICY

## The Education Act 1996 states that:

- 2.1 The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —
  - 2.1.1 to his age, ability and aptitude and
  - 2.1.2 to any special educational needs he may have,
  - 2.1.3 either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- 2.2 By law a person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year (the last Friday in June) —
  - 2.2.1 if he attains the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
  - 2.2.2 if he attains that age on that day, or
  - 2.2.3 (unless paragraph (2.2.1) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following his attaining that age.
  - 2.2.4 Students enrolled at Focus School Cambridge Campus are expected to attend school until the completion of year 13 unless there are specific circumstances agreed on an individual basis
- 2.3 The law requires regular attendance by students registered at Focus School Cambridge Campus. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure attendance.
- 2.4 The School's Duties:

- 2.4.1** The campus has a duty to inform the Local Authority at agreed intervals, of the name and address of any registered student who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent for a continuous period of 10 or more school days, except if:
- such absences are covered by a medical certificate
  - the absences are authorised by the school
- 2.4.2** The Campus is required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session on which the presence or absence of every student should be recorded.
- All attendance registers must be recorded in SIMS.
  - Lesson Monitor is to be used to record attendance at the start of lesson 5.
- 2.4.3** The Campus must provide the Secretary of State with information of levels of authorised and unauthorised absence when requested or via the DfE Independent School Census.
- 2.4.4** The Campus will monitor and evaluate attendance, analysing trends and / or patterns over time for individuals or groups of students using SIMS, see Appendix 4.
- 2.4.5** The Campus should demonstrate that where a student's absence falls below 90%, they have taken action to address this

### **3 PROCEDURE**

#### **3.1 Campus Sessions**

- 3.1.1** The Focus Academic Calendar and Timetables determine the times of the daily sessions and duration of the terms and are approved by the Trustees.

#### **3.2 Attendance Registers**

- 3.2.1** The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 govern the attendance registers that the campus must keep. They also regulate the power to grant leave of absence.
- 3.2.2** A set of national codes and descriptors to record the reason for a student's absence is as Appendix 1.

#### **3.3 Electronic Register in SIMS**

- 3.3.1** Admission and attendance registers are kept in SIMS. The registers must be backed up, in the form of an electronic or printed copy, not less than once a month. Each of these additional copies of the admission and attendance registers must be retained for three years after the end of the school year in question, as will those done by hand. Printed copies on a monthly basis should be signed and dated by the Headteacher as accurate records and retained in a single volume.

#### **3.4 Setting up the academic year in SIMS**

- 3.4.1** There are 190 days for maintained schools, 185 for Focus Schools. This will be administered centrally by Focus Learning Trust.

#### **3.5 Keeping Registers**

- 3.5.1** Registers must:
- be taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
  - distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence and daily totals calculated.
- 3.5.2** If a correction is made to an original entry the correction will be clearly identifiable. There are only three occasions when an entry in an *attendance* register can be altered:

- When staff discover that an error has been made, for example a typing error
- When a student's absence was unexplained but has since been explained
- When a student's name has changed

**3.5.3** There are two occasions when an entry to an *admission* register can be changed:

- To correct an error
- When the details have changed, eg name, address

**3.5.4** Whenever a change is made, both the original entry and the amendment must be clearly distinguishable. The original entry and the correction should be kept so entries appear in chronological order. Any amendments should also indicate the reason for them and who made the amendment.

### **3.6 Inspection of Attendance Register**

**3.6.1** It is a statutory requirement for all schools to keep attendance registers and these must be available for inspection during school hours by authorised persons. Those authorised to inspect registers could include Ofsted, SIS, Estyn, HMIE and ETINI Inspectors and authorised local authority officers.

### **3.7 Preservation of Records**

**3.7.1** Entries in the register, whether recorded manually or on the computer, must be kept for 3 years from the dates they were made.

### **3.8 Data Protection**

**3.8.1** The Campus Trust is registered with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. The campus will retain information for as long as is necessary and usually for six years from the date on which the Student left the school or six years after his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, whichever is longer.

### **3.9 School Leaving Age**

**3.9.1** Students must do one of the following until they are 18:

- Stay in full time education
- Start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- Work or Volunteer (for 20 hours or more a week) whilst in part time education or training

### **3.10 Leave of Absence for Students**

**3.10.1** Leave of absence will only be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to a parent application for leave. The following should also be taken into consideration:

- The student's attendance history
- The age of the child
- The time of the year
- The nature of the absence
- Employee difficulties in accessing holidays during school holiday times

**3.10.2** Leave of absence shall not be granted unless:

- An application has been made in advance to the Lead CA by a parent with whom the student normally resides; and
- The Lead CA has liaised with the parent and Headteacher to approve the application.

**3.11 Authorised Absence** (See Appendix 1 – National Codes for full list of attendance codes)

**3.11.1** Absence may be authorised by the school for the following reasons:

- Illness (Code I)
- Medical and dental appointments (Code M)
- Interviews (Code J)
- Holidays in term time (Agreed Code G, Not agreed Code H)
- Exclusion (Code E)
- Study Leave, Year 11 only (Code S)
- Study Leave, Y12 and Y13 (Code X – not required in school)
- Weddings, Bereavement and Special Occasions (Code C)
- Work experience (Code W)
- Religious observance (Code R)
- Planned whole or partial school closure for national community events or for up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training (Code #)

### **3.12 Authorising Absence**

**3.12.1** The campus should authorise absence only after careful consideration. If the reason for absence is unknown at the time the register is taken, it should be marked as unauthorised and can be changed later.

### **3.13 Local Authority**

**3.13.1** The Campus is required to maintain an attendance register and Trustees will report as soon as possible to the Local Authority in which the student lives:

- Ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence)
- Failure to attend regularly.

### **3.14 Police Power of Truants**

**3.14.1** If a police officer has reasonable cause to believe that a child is of compulsory school age and is absent from school without lawful authority, the officer can take the child back to school or to another place designated by the Local Authority. The child must be in a public place when this power is exercised. Truancy is not a criminal offence, so this is not a power of arrest or detention.

### **3.15 Parental Responsibility for School Attendance (see 4.0)**

**3.15.1** It is the duty of the parent of a child of compulsory school age to ensure that the child receives efficient, full time education; they must ensure that their children attends regularly and aim for a minimum attendance rate of 95%.

**3.15.2** Parents have no right to authorise the absence of a registered student of compulsory age; this may only be done by the school.

**3.15.3** If a student is absent due to illness or a family emergency then the parent must notify the campus by telephone by 10:00 that morning.

**3.15.4** Parents must explain all absenteeism with a note beforehand or immediately upon the student's return to the campus. Parents may be prosecuted if they know that their child is not attending school and they fail without reasonable justification to cause their child to attend or fail to secure a child's regular attendance at the school at which they are registered.

**3.15.5** If a registered student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly, the Local Authority can prosecute a parent; issue an Education Supervision Order, parenting order or school attendance order.

### 3.16 Contacting Parents on the First Day of Absence

3.16.1 If a student is absent without explanation when the register is checked, school staff should, wherever possible, contact the parents that same day, and always in the case of students whose attendance is a cause for concern.

3.16.2 This declared procedure of 'first day contact' makes it clear to students and parents that absence is a matter of concern and will be followed up.

### 3.17 Process for dealing with a child that goes missing in education

3.17.1 The following procedure will be followed to ensure that no child goes missing in education, absconds or repeatedly goes missing:

- First day contact with parents

3.17.2 If, at any stage during the school day a student is unaccounted for, the following procedure will be followed, in order, until the student is located or the police are informed:

- The Headteacher (or the person deputising) is immediately informed and Reception is contacted to check there is not an authorised absence or departure from school.
- The student's friends, peers and all staff are asked for information which might explain the absence.
- A thorough search of site is conducted.
- A fire drill is conducted.
- The parents of the missing student are contacted.
- The Headteacher (or the person deputising) contacts the police.
- The risk and time a student could be missing is minimised by the twice daily Registration procedure and individual lesson register taken.

### 3.18 Dealing with Lateness

3.18.1 The school should be alert to emerging patterns of late arrivals. The register can be kept open for a period of 15 minutes after the beginning of registration. This can be extended in certain circumstances such as bad weather or transport difficulties.

3.18.2 If a student misses registration and fails to provide an adequate explanation, this constitutes unauthorised absence.

### 3.19 Improving Punctuality

3.19.1 The campus will record and follow up lateness in respect of students who arrive late on a regular basis.

3.19.2 The following principles will be applied:

- Students will see that punctuality is taken seriously and followed up on.
- Parents will be informed – they may not be aware that there is an issue.

### 3.19.3 DfE School Census Information

3.19.4 Schools are required to complete the School Level Annual Census for Independent Schools on the third Thursday of January each year. The DfE provide further guidance with regard to this in the Autumn Term, and the NSO will communicate this to schools.

## 4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Post(s)	Responsibilities	Ref
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All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to students and their parents</li> <li>• ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement</li> <li>• ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance process and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue</li> <li>• ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily</li> </ul>	
NLT Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report attendance figures on a monthly basis to OneSchool Global</li> </ul>	
School Trust Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regularly review the attendance policy of the school to ensure that the absence procedures are followed</li> <li>• ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff</li> <li>• take time at Trust meetings to regularly review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year</li> <li>• ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data</li> <li>• ensure that senior leaders make the necessary referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance</li> </ul>	
Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform the Local Authority at agreed intervals, of the name and address of any registered student who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent for a continuous period of 10 or more school days</li> <li>• ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day</li> <li>• provide the secretary of state with information of levels of authorised and unauthorised absence when requested or via the DfE Independent School Census or similar in the regions</li> <li>• monitor and evaluate attendance, analysing trends and / or patterns over time for individuals or groups of students</li> <li>• demonstrate that where a student's absence falls below 90%, they have taken action to address this</li> <li>• be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to students and their parents</li> <li>• ensure that the school's teaching and</li> </ul>	



	<p>learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinate with the trustees to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness</li> <li>• ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance process</li> <li>• report to the trustees each term and the lead CA for attendance half-termly on attendance records, data and provision</li> <li>• ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively</li> <li>• document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance</li> </ul>	
<p>Parents &amp; Carers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school</li> <li>• promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home</li> <li>• encourage and support their children's aspirations</li> <li>• follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (see section 3.15), and include an expected date for return</li> <li>• do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours</li> <li>• use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises</li> <li>• keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance</li> <li>• enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance</li> <li>• do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they must follow the process (see section 3.10)</li> </ul>	

## 5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- DfE Publication – School Attendance – Departmental Advice for Schools including Independent Schools (October 2014)
- Children Missing in Education (September 2016)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016)
- Keeping Learners Safe (December 2015) (Wales)
- Education Act 1996
- Data Protection Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Education (Penalty Notices)(England)(Amendment)Regulations 2013
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and amendments)
- Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- Children Act 1989

## 6.0 GLOSSARY

**Attendance** – Full time education means attendance for the period described by the school and a student may be marked absent if they arrive after the time when the school closes its register. Regulations distinguish between ‘authorised’ and ‘unauthorised’ absences although this distinction is no longer reported.

**Admission Register** – is the Roll Register of all students at the school. It includes the date of admission and the name and address of the school that the students last attended. If a student leaves, then details of the school that they go to must be recorded.

**Attendance Register** – is the daily register taken at the beginning of each day and again in the afternoon. The use of Attendance Codes will be used to record individual student’s attendance at school.

**Persistent Absence** – attendance which is less than 90%

## 7.0 AUDIT AND ASSURANCE

What steps will be undertaken to assess how well the policy is working

What criteria will be used for assurance that the policy is being met.

Element to be monitored	Lead	Tool	Freq	Reporting Arrangements	Acting on Recommendations and Lead(S)	Change in Practice and Lessons to be shared

## 8.0 APPENDICES

[Appendix 1: National Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings](#)

[Appendix 2: Monitoring Record](#)



### Attendance Policy Appendix 1

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### NATIONAL ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Educated off site ( <i>not</i> dual registration)	Approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (ie when Student is attending another establishment and is permitted, when a Student is at a Pupil Referral Unit, attends a special school on a part-time basis or temporarily received education in a hospital special school)	Approved educational activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday ( <i>not</i> agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed following the procedure and at the discretion of the CA, Headteacher and SA)	Authorised absence
I	Illness ( <i>not</i> medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview for example with prospective employer	Approved educational activity
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence

<b>T</b>	Gipsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved educational activity
<b>X</b>	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age Students (not required to be in school)	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (eg closure of all or part of the school site due to an unavoidable cause, school transport not being available, or a national emergency, a weather related emergency, such as snow or flooding, a natural disaster, a health related emergency, such as restrictions to travel in certain areas because of a outbreak of foot and mouth disease, travel disruption caused by the rationing or non-availability of fuel)	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	Planned whole or partial school closure (eg between terms; use of school as polling station; up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training) Different term dates for different Students (eg staggered starts; induction days)	Not counted in possible attendances

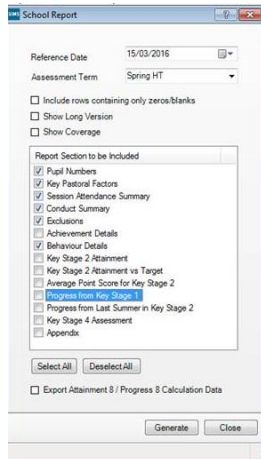


# Attendance Policy Appendix 2

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This report can be generated from SIMS.

**SIMS** ► Reports ► School Report



Then Select / deselect the sections required ► Click Generate. This will produce a Preview Screen which allows you to print or save as a file.

[The SIMS School Report

**Focus, 15 Mar 2016**

School Details

Head Teacher		Governance		School Years	
School Phase		Local Authority		Pupils of this school	90

Pupil Numbers

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	All Years
Pupils of this school												
Male												
Female												
Single Reg												
Male												
Female												
Total Pupil Numbers												
Male												
Female												

Key Pastoral Factors

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	All Years
Medical Condition												
Gifted and Talented												
SEN Needs												
SEN Status												

