POLICY: **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: D.Dain   ***MONITORING***: HOYs

DATE: April 2018   ***REVIEW DATE***: September 2018

RATIONALE

The correct place for students to be on a school day is in school. Therefore any absence from school is only acceptable with a justifiable reason.
Punctuality is to be encouraged as a socially desirable quality, which helps to create self-discipline in the students.

The Education Act 1996 states that it is a legal requirement that parents ensure that their child is at school.   It is also the school's legal duty to publish its absence figures.   At Paget we aim to work with the parents to ensure that all students attend regularly.
The Department of Education recently made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. Paget will therefore respond to any requests with a letter informing them of the head teachers decision
If any requests are made that are not deemed as Exceptional circumstances, we are obliged to inform parents that they may be subject to a Penalty Notice should they continue with the unauthorised absence. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice fine would be :-
•   £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
•   £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.
•   If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

If the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school. Please see the appendix for the Staffordshire Code of Conduct regarding attendance and requests for leave.

Our key priority is to ensure that Paget students are as successful as possible, are able to reach their full potential and gain maximum benefits from their educational experience.

We hope that upon reflection parents will support the schools decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

PURPOSE

▪   To ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of the need to attend school regularly and on time.
▪   To make clear to all concerned the expectations of the school.
▪   To establish working practices for attendance and punctuality that staff, students and parents alike are familiar with and can adhere to.

GUIDELINES

- Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.   Information about the cause of absence is always required.
- Punctuality covers all aspects of the school day and students are encouraged to be on time for morning registration, lessons and assemblies.
- Absence is monitored by an electronic system which is updated immediately.
- Form Tutors and Heads of Year will monitor attendance and punctuality, applying sanctions for inexcusable lateness and contacting home or the Education Welfare Service where poor attendance is causing a concern. This will be in line with the school's BFL policy.   Any lateness of 5 minutes or more, to a lesson or to school, will be met with a C3 detention.
- The supervisor of the Internal Exclusion Room will be on duty on the school steps for a period of up to 30 minutes every morning. She will issue C3 detention letters to all students who are 5 minutes late or more, unless they have a note of acceptable explanation.
- When students are absent, parents/carers are expected to notify the school.
- Staffordshire County Council employs Educational Welfare Officers who work with school and families where students are absent from school. Appropriate action, including legal measures, is taken where necessary.
- Paget has adopted the policy recommended by the Education Welfare Service with regard to families / carers who persist in failing to send their child[ren] to school regularly, i.e. a fixed penalty may be issued by the EWS to the family

CONCLUSION

As with all our policies, the Attendance and Punctuality Policy is intended to achieve success and to ensure that all students receive ongoing guidance and support in developing both academic and inter-personal education.   Attendance, punctuality and a working partnership with parents/carers are crucial to achieve this.

WORKING PRACTICE: **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

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PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

▪ Every tutor is issued with an 'Individual Attendance Chart' each term.   Tutors should encourage their group to complete the chart on a daily/weekly basis.

▪ Rewards for improved and perfect attendance are given on a half-termly, termly and annual basis.   A combination of certificates and prizes are given, based upon data generated by SIMS and administered by the school office.   [HOYs can collect this on the first day of the last week of each term.] Students will be rewarded for good attendance.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

The school applies the following procedures in response to individual student absence:-

▪ Absence due to family holiday cannot be authorised and letters are issued to inform the parents of this unauthorised absence and that the EWO will be informed which could result in a fine being issued.

▪ It is expected that on the first day of absence of their child a parent/carer will inform the school of the reason[s] for that absence. It is also expected that an indication of when the student is expected to return to school will be provided.

▪ If no such contact is made, the school telephones the home of the student who does not attend, on the first day of absence. If there is no reply from the absent student's home, a letter is sent to request reasons for the absence.

▪ If no explanation has been provided, it is expected that upon the return to school of the students, their parent/guardian will write a note or use the slip at the back of the student planner to explain the reason[s] for their child's absence.

If the school receives no explanation within 2 or 3 days of the student's return to school, the following procedures will apply:-

▪ A member of the office team will contact, by telephone, the parent/guardian of a student who is absent from school but whose absence has not been explained.

▪ The student's form tutor continues to remind the student that an explanation is required and may make contact with the home direct. Iszara Amreen provides printouts of any absences for all tutors on a weekly basis to assist with this process.

▪ Letters are periodically generated detailing all unexplained absence.   One letter is produced for every student who has an unexplained absence.   These are passed to HOYs who then decide whether or not the letters should go to the student's home.

- The Pastoral Deputy will also ensure that parents/carers whose child[ren] persist with an average attendance of less that 94% but above 90% are informed of the school's concerns by post [at least twice yearly].

- Students with attendance below 90% are considered 'persistently absent' and are monitored even more closely and are picked up by the Student Support Centre, HOYs and EWO for additional support.

- The matter may be referred to the school's Education Welfare Officer. [It should be noted that the EWO is independent of the school and can provide impartial advice to parents/guardians. Telephone – 01283 139068.] This is likely to happen when:-

  - The tutor or HOY spots a continued 'pattern' of absence, whether authorised or not.
  - The child accumulates 20 unauthorised sessions
  - An individual student does not attend school and efforts by the tutor/HOY to contact home fail.
  - An individual student's attendance slips below an average of 90% persistent absence, whether their absence has been authorised or not.
  - A student doesn't return from a known period of absence, e.g. holidays or exclusion.
  - An individual is believed by the HOY to have a truancy problem.
  - A parent or carer keeps their healthy child at home during school time and continues to do so despite intervention[s] by a member of the pastoral team.
  - An individual student persists in being late to school despite interventions by a member of the pastoral team.

LATENESS PROCEDURES

- Tutors will encourage and monitor the punctuality of their tutees.

- Any child arriving after 8.50 am will be issued with a late detention that must be completed that lunchtime for 20 minutes. The school now operates a 5 minute warning bell to inform students to move to their tutor rooms, by the bell at 8.50am students are expected to be in the room ready for morning registration. This will be rigorously supported each morning by the support staff, HOYs and members of the SLT. The school gate will be closed at 8.50am and any students arriving after that time will be issued with a detention slip.

- Paget's AM attendance registration closes at 9.30am. Students who register after this window where no reasonable reason has been given by parents/carers will be marked as a 'U'.

- Persistent latecomers may then be referred to the EWO if no significant improvement occurs.

REGISTRATION BY TUTORS

Registration of all students is done electronically through the SIMS system. Tutors are responsible for all a.m. registrations and for monitoring the attendance patterns of their tutor group.
Tutors will register their tutor group within the 8.50 – 9.00 a.m. registration period (8.50-8.55 on Weds & Fri.)   They must aim to take their register as close to 8.50 a.m. as possible.
Whenever an amendment to a student's record of attendance is required, tutors should followed the procedures they have learned in staff training.

REGISTRATION BY SUBJECT TEACHER

The classroom teacher needs to take their register quickly in order to inform the main office immediately of any possible absences.   This is crucial in 3 ways:-

- o So that the office staff can quickly respond to any parent/carer who is anxious about their child's attendance at school at any given hour.
- o It allows the office staff to identify which students are actually absent before contacting a relevant parent/guardian to seek an explanation for that absence.
- o It ensures that we are safeguarding our students by ensuring their whereabouts at all times.

- Each subject teacher is required to take a register of the class electronically, using the SIMS system.   The register should be taken within the first 10 minutes of the session in order to speed attendance data to the main office.

- The classroom teacher should follow the same steps as a form tutor when completing the SIMS register.

The following should also be noted when taking a subject register:-

- When a student arrives late to the class it is vital that the entire class register is recalled and updated.
- Often it is clear from the register that an absent student has been marked with a symbol that explains their absence [usually by their tutor] e.g. 'H' for family holiday or 'B' for education elsewhere. When this occurs please enter the same symbol rather than an 'N' for absent.

IDENTIFYING UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted.   This includes keeping children off school unnecessarily; truancy; absences that have never been properly explained and persistent, chronic lateness.

Tutors should always consult with their HOY if they are in any doubt at all as to whether to authorise an absence or not.   If the tutor decides not to authorise an absence, the relevant HOY must always be told straight away.

Far greater details about what is possible through the SIMS attendance monitoring system are attached to this policy. (appendix 2)

Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, **complete the attached form and send it to the head teacher**. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **well before** the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Head teachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.

2. The Department for Education makes it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Head teachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.

4. Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects that they should be in school during term time.

5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
    *   the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
    *   the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
    *   the overall attendance pattern of the child
    *   frequency of similar requests
    *   whether the parent made the request in advance
    *   students/pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.

6. Where parents have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However head teachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.

7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

8. Should the school decide **not to grant leave of absence** and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised,** which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 **per parent* per child**. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.

9. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law.

    * Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

Lesson Monitor in SIMS .net

Accessing the Register via the Home Page

Teachers will see their timetable for today displayed in the **My Classes Today** panel on the Home Page.

1. Double-click the required lesson to display the **Take Register** page.

2. The **Select Class** browser, which displays the timeline, is hidden but can be displayed by clicking the **Browse** button. If required, the SIMS .net Home Page can be accessed again via **Focus | Home Page**.

Adding Additional Identification Columns

Additional identification columns, i.e. **Date of Birth**, **Gender**, **Year** and **Admission Number**, can be added and removed as required but apply only to the current register.

Right-click the **Name** or **Reg** column heading and select one or more additional columns from the pop-up menu.

The register expands to accommodate the additional columns, which can be removed if required by right-clicking the **Name**, **Reg**, or any of the additional column headings and deselecting the unwanted column(s) from the pop-up menu.

Accessing the Register via the Focus Menu

Select **Focus | Lesson Monitor | Take Register** to display the **Select Class** browser. Alternatively, click the **Take Register** button located on the SIMS .net Focus Bar.

Take Register icon

Class Teachers

1. Ensure that the required date is displayed.

2. Double-click the required class on the timeline to display the associated register.

Staff covering lessons

If you are covering for another teacher or you are, for example, an administrator who wishes to view a teacher's classes/lessons:

1. Ensure that the required date is displayed.
2. Click the **Search** button adjacent to the **Teacher** field to open the **Browse for Lessons** dialog.
3. Enter all or part of the name and/or select the period you are teaching and then click the **Search** button.
4. Double-click the required lesson or highlight and click **OK** to display the register for the selected lesson.

To view the timeline, click the **Browse** button to return to the **Select Class** browser.

Taking the Register

The orange highlight indicates the name of the pupil/student and the period for which the mark is about to be entered.

Right-click the **Name** or **Reg** column heading to add additional identification columns.

Hovering over a cell displays the teacher's name and class. Comments and minutes late are also displayed if they have been entered.

Extra names will initially be added to the bottom of the list.

Entering a mark using the keyboard

Click in the cell and enter a mark using the keyboard. As each mark is entered the highlight automatically moves down to the next pupil/student.

Select the required code from a list of all available codes

Either right-click in the cell in which you wish to enter a mark and select **Display Codes** from the pop-up menu or click the **Codes** button to open the **Codes** dialog.

Double-click the required code which is then displayed in the current cell. The highlight moves down to the next pupil/student. The **Codes** dialog can remain open while the register is marked. Continue entering marks as required. Click the **Close** button to close the **Codes** dialog.

TIP: To enter mark(s) using the keyboard while the Codes dialog is open, click in the register where the next mark is to be entered (this returns the focus to the register page) and enter the required mark via the keyboard.

Enter the same code for ALL pupil/students

1. Click the column heading for the current period. The background colour of the selected cells changes to cyan.
2. Enter / or \ as appropriate to flood fill the entire column.
3. Where the present mark is not applicable, individual marks can be edited by clicking in the appropriate cell and entering the correct mark using the keyboard or **Codes** dialog.

Enter the same code for a block of pupil/students

1. To select pupil/students who are listed sequentially, click in the first cell in which you wish to enter the mark. Hold down the **Shift** key and click the last cell in which you wish to enter the same mark. The background colour of the selected cells changes to cyan.
2. Enter a mark using the keyboard or **Codes** dialog.

Editing/deleting a mark

If you wish to edit or delete a mark before it is saved, ensure that the highlight is on the cell displaying the required mark. Enter the correct code using the keyboard or **Codes** dialog, or press the **Delete** key, as appropriate. A dash (-) is displayed in the cell where a mark has been deleted.

Saving the data

Click the **Save** button to save the marks. If there are any pupil/students with missing marks, SIMS .net will offer to mark them as absent using the code **N** (no reason yet provided for absence). If you click the **No** button you will be returned to the **Take Register** page without saving. Missing marks can then be entered manually before the register is saved.

NOTE: If you wish to edit marks after saving, ensure that the Preserve/Overwrite toggle button is displaying Overwrite.

Preserve/Overwrite toggle button

Printing the register

Click the **Print** button to open a standard Windows® **Print** dialog. Ensure that the printer settings are correct and then click **OK**.

Lesson Monitor in SIMS .net

Adding Extra Names

1. Click the **Extra Names** button to open the **Add Extra Names** browser.
2. Search for the required pupil/student.
3. Highlight the required name and click the **OK** button. Alternatively, double-click the name to return to the **Take Register** page.
4. A message informs you that you are about to add this pupil/student to the class for this lesson only. To confirm the action click the **Yes** button.

    The extra name is added to the bottom of the list already marked as present.

    The list will be sorted into alphabetical order when the register is saved.
5. Additional names can be added using the same method.

Viewing the Class Photograph

The Class Photograph is a composite display made up of all available individual photographs that are stored in the SIMS database.

1. Click the **Class Photo** button to open the **Class Photo** dialog.

2. If information is required about the SIMS Schools Photography Licensed Partners, click the **Click for Photographers** link at the bottom of the dialog to open a Capita web page.

Viewing/Editing Historical Marks

The historical view enables you to view and edit historical marks for up to ten meetings of the selected class. It can be used to view a pupil/student's pattern of attendance and correct any errors with previous marks.

To view previous lessons for the current class, select the **History** radio button. The current lesson is displayed in the right-hand column. You can continue marking the current lesson on this screen.

To return to the **Day View** for the selected date, select the **Today** radio button.

Viewing/Editing Future Marks

The future view option enables you to view, enter and edit future marks for up to ten instances of the selected lesson. For example, if a family holiday has been approved or a doctor or dental appointment is known, marks can be entered so that interested staff have visibility of these codes.

To view the next ten instances of the selected lessons, select the **Future** radio button. The current lesson is displayed in the left-hand column.

To return to the register for the selected date and period, select the **Today** radio button.

Recording Minutes Late and Comments

The Minutes Late option allows a teacher to record the length of time that a pupil/student was late arriving at class.

The Comments option allows a brief comment to be recorded regarding a pupil/student's behaviour, for example, where a pupil/student consistently forgets their homework or is disruptive during the lesson. An in-depth record of **Behaviour** can be recorded via the **Links** button.

1. Locate the required pupil/student and click in the associated cell for the current lesson.
2. Click the **Comments** or **Minutes Late** button, as appropriate, to open the associated dialog.
3. Enter your comments or the number of minutes late and click the **OK** button to return to the **Take Register** page.

    Where comments have been added, the top right-hand of the cell is red. Where minutes late have been recorded, the background colour of the cell is cyan. Hovering over a cell displays the teacher's name and class. Minutes late and comments are also displayed, if they have been entered.
4. Click the **Save** button.

Producing a Minutes Late Report

1. Select **Focus | Lesson Monitor | Lesson Report** to display the **Late Minutes Report** browser.
2. Select a date range.
3. Select the required scope, e.g. **Whole School, Year 7, Year 8**, etc.
4. A default title is shown as **Minutes Late for Lessons** but can be edited if required.
5. Specify the Subjects to be included in the report by selecting the appropriate check boxes. One or more subjects can be selected. Alternatively, select the **All** check box to produce a report that includes all the listed subjects.
6. Click the **Search** button to generate the report, which is displayed in print preview where the usual options apply.

Displaying Marks

The Display Marks routine provides a read-only view of the selected pupil/student's marks. It is particularly useful for looking at pupil/students on-roll this year. However, your school will find it has many other uses including looking back at the previous year's attendance records of current pupil/students, and reviewing previous year's attendance record of pupil/students who left last year.

1. Select **Focus | Attendance/Lesson Monitor | Display Marks** to display the **Find Student** browser.
2. Select the required pupil/student.
3. Select the **Sessions Week** or **Month View**, or the **Sessions and Lessons Day** or **Week View** radio button as required.

For more information please refer to the *Lesson Monitor in SIMS .net handbook* accessed by clicking **Other handbooks** in the **Documentation** shortcuts panel in SIMS .net.

Recording Behaviour Incidents and Achievement

1. Select the names of the pupil/students involved in the event. Multiple pupil/students can be selected by holding down the **Ctrl** key and clicking on the individual names.
2. Click the **Links** button drop-down arrow and select either **Behaviour** or **Achievement** from the drop-down menu, to open the corresponding dialog.

    The dialogs for recording behaviour and achievement are similar. Behaviour is documented here.

3. Several details will already be shown in the dialog. Enter the additional information required in the **Details** panel, selecting from the drop-down list where applicable.
4. If you wish to add another member of staff who was also involved in the incident, e.g. Head of Year, click the **New** button adjacent to the existing name(s) to open the **New Behaviour Staff Link** dialog.
5. If you wish to add an additional pupil/student to the list of those involved in the event, click the **Students Involved New** button to open the **New Behaviour Student Link** dialog.

    Relevant Notes or Documents can be attached to the record via the **New Behaviour Student Link** dialog, if required.
6. Click the **Save** button to save the details.

For detailed instructions, please refer to the *Lesson Monitor in SIMS .net* or the *Managing Pupil/ Students in SIMS .net handbooks* accessed via the **Documentation** shortcuts panel in SIMS .net.

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