

# **Attendance Policy**

## **1.Introduction:**

Meden School recognises the importance of regular attendance at school. It is important that student attendance is closely monitored to ensure appropriate intervention to overcome barriers to school attendance. The school will endeavour to recognise high levels of students' attendance and to challenge and support students where attendance issues are identified.

## **2. Management of Attendance**

The School uses the SIMS and PARS system to manage pupil attendance. Registration sessions occur every morning and afternoon, with registers closing 10 minutes after registration 8.30am and at 12.55 pm (period 5). Students who arrive at school after this time are registered with a late mark and are expected to make up the time with a detention. This will be for a 45minute duration, to take place on the next available after school detention period.

Attendance is overseen by the School Leader responsible for Personal Development and Welfare. Heads of House are responsible for tracking attendance issues and for initiating concern referrals to the Meden Attendance Team. Tutors are responsible for monitoring day to day attendance and acting as the initial liaison point with home. School leaders meet on a regular basis to review attendance issues for each House group.

Attendance issues for Meden students are overseen by the School Leader, Craig Gibbison.

## **3.Identifying and Improving attendance**

Where attendance is a concern pro-active action will follow, informing parents of the emerging issues and engaging in dialogue to ensure improvement. The school uses trigger points to help prioritise cases, although each individual case will be managed according to circumstances but may include:

- a) Contact with home via phone calls and texts.
- b) Invitation into school to discuss attendance concerns.
- c) Formal discussions and written concern letters to parents these to be reviewed weekly.
- d) Follow up letters and issues as required. School will liaise with external agencies to consider supportive measures and the possibility of a fixed penalty notice.
- e) Request to Targeted Support to initiate legal proceedings. Appropriate multi-agency discussion, including referral to the Meden 'Jat'.

## **4. Term-Time Holidays**

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude. Taking children out of the academic year for a holiday does not allow them to receive an efficient full-time education.

The government strongly urges schools not to approve such absence from school and indeed nowadays classifies absence for holidays as truancy. Schools are also discouraged by the Targeted Support (who are responsible for attendance at County level) from allowing pupils to leave school in

term-time to take holidays. Attendance percentages, absenteeism and truancy are closely monitored by the County Targeted Support Service and, of course, OfSTED, and attendance statistics have to be returned to the DFE annually. The governors have also recently reviewed the attendance figures of the school and have agreed that in their view, holidays should not be taken in term-time but in the allocated school holiday time.

Therefore, as from **September 2015**, all holiday requests need to be submitted on a *Leave of Absence Request* form which can be collected from the main school office or on the school website. Unless it is for exceptional circumstances **holidays will not be authorised**. If parents choose to take their child out of education for a holiday without authorisation, if the level of absence is in excess of 3 days in total over a 6 week period, then school will refer the incident to Targeted Support who will then consider issuing a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure the regular attendance of their child. The Penalty Notice is set at £120 and should be paid within 28 days of the date on which the notice starts. If the penalty is paid within 21 days of the date on which the notice starts the sum is reduced to £60.

#### 5. Rewarding good attendance

Our policy acknowledges the importance of good attendance. Heads of House recognise high levels of attendance through displays and celebration assemblies and reward trips.

#### Equality Duty

*This policy has been reviewed in the context of Equality Impact and assessed as: Neutral*

*This policy was last reviewed in: September 2016*

*Name of reviewer: Mr C Gibbison*