PURPOSE

The Department for Education stresses the importance of good attendance, and the Focus Attendance Policy and Procedure fosters this commitment.

The campus owes a duty of care to both parents and students to ensure that all students attend regularly. The campus will work to lower any unnecessary student absence.

The campus will monitor and evaluate attendance and punctuality and the impact of the campus's strategies to improve both behaviour and attendance of students.

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.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Staff Members, Trustees, Students, Parents and Guardians both current and prospective.

UPDATE TO POLICY

The following updates have been reflected in this Policy Review:
- DfE School Attendance – Advice for independent schools – October 2014
- Education until the Age of 18
- Children Missing in Education Procedure
- Study from Home Days for Year 11 and above – Code S
- Whole school closure for global or national community event – Code #
- SIMS – Attendance Registers carried out in SIMS
- DfE s2s Data Transfer
- Terminology changes: CA changed to Lead CA, Senior Teacher changed to Headteacher, LA changed to Local Authority
- Annual School Census

DEFINITIONS

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.

POLICY STATEMENT

The law requires regular attendance by students registered at Swaffham Campus.   It is the parent's responsibility to ensure attendance. The campus is responsible for informing the Local Authority of irregular attendance, and deletion from the school register when the next school is not known.

The School's Duties:
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that children receive education. This duty is normally carried out through the education welfare service
- Trustees should regularly review the Attendance Policy of the school to ensure that the absence procedures are followed
- 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
- 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
- From September 2015 all attendance registers must be recorded in SIMS
- The campus is required to keep an admissions register / roll register, which records personal details of every student at the school. Appendix 2 Admission Register Content
- 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
- The campus will monitor and evaluate attendance, analysing trends and / or patterns over time for individuals or groups of students. Appendix 5 (Unauthorised / Authorised Absence Record, links with rewards sanctions and pastoral) may be used to assist in analysing attendance however, SIMS can also be used to produce reports.

PROCEDURES

Campus Sessions
The Focus Academic Calendar and Timetables determine the times of the daily sessions and duration of the terms, and are approved by the Trustees.

Admission & Attendance Registers
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 govern the admission and attendance registers that the campus must keep. They also regulate the power to grant leave of absence.

A set of national codes and descriptors to record the reason for a Student's absence is as Appendix I.

Electronic Register in SIMS
If admission and attendance registers are kept on the computer in SIMS, they do not necessarily need to be printed out daily. The registers must be backed up, in the form of an electronic or printed copy, not less than once a month. For example, each month's permanent electronic copy could be stored on a CD or flash drive/USB device. 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.

Keeping Registers

Registers must:
- be taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions
- be completed in ink with corrections made in such a way that the original entry is clearly distinguishable
- distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence and daily totals calculated

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

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

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.

The name of a registered student of compulsory school age can be deleted from the admission register in the following circumstances:
- The school attendance order naming the school has been altered or revoked
- The student has been registered at another school
- Where a student is registered at more than one school, the student may be deleted from the admission register of a school that they have ceased to attend only when the Head of any or every other school at which the student is registered gives consent (except where the student has died / been permanently excluded)
- The student has ceased to attend and the parents have satisfied the Trustees / proprietor that the student is receiving full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude elsewhere
- A change in the student's ordinary residence makes attendance at the school unreasonable
- The student has failed to return to school within 20 days of the expiry of a period of exceptional leave of absence, unless the absence is because of sickness or some other unavoidable cause
- The school medical officer has certified that the student is unlikely to be sufficiently healthy to attend school, the parents must also indicate that the student does not intend to continue education at the school
- The student has been continuously absent (without authorisation) for at least four weeks; after reasonable enquiry, has not been located by the school or the Local Authority
- The name of the student who is detained in pursuance of a final court order or order of recall may be deleted from the register only where the order is for a period of not less than four months and where the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student will return to school at the end of that period
- The student is known to have died
- The student will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and the student intends to leave
- The student has been permanently excluded, but only when the appeal process has been concluded, or the parent decides not to appeal.

If the school is concerned about any aspect of a student's transfer to another school, eg. If the parents are reluctant to give the name of the new school, or if a registered student has 'disappeared' and is no longer known to be at any address in the locality, the school should

inform the designated child protection officer within the Local Authority. If the school has good reason to believe that a crime may have been committed, they should contact the police directly.

Students Changing School
When a student transfers to another school Trustees are required to:
- Send information to the student's new school, within 15 days of the student ceasing to be registered at the current school
- Respond to requests for information from a school at which a former student is registered, within 15 days of receiving the request.

When a student transfers to another school, it is usual to cooperate with the provision of a reference. Care must be taken not to breach the duties of confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Student information is usually stored on the school's SIMS system – the information must be transferred into a common transfer file (CTF) unless the school does not have the capability to generate or read information in such a format, when it can be supplied in paper form.

DfE s2s Data Transfer
When a student joins the school a CTF is sent using the DfE Secure Data Transfer System, School to School (s2s); access to the system is via an application to the DfE by the school.

Inspection of Admission and Attendance Register
It is a statutory requirement for all schools to keep admission and attendance registers and these must be available for inspection during school hours by authorised persons. Those authorised to inspect registers could include Ofsted, SIS Inspectors and authorised local authority officers.

Those inspecting the registers will have access to the electronic registers and additional backup copies.

Ensure paper copies of the Admissions and Attendance Registers are signed and dated by the Headteacher as a true and accurate record.

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

Attendance Registers therefore need to be retained for 3 years, but it is advisable that Admission Registers are kept indefinitely.

Data Protection
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 18th birthday, whichever is longer.

School Attendance
Full time education means attendance for the period described by the campus and a student may be marked absent if he or she arrives after the time when the campus closes its register.

The national codes distinguish between 'authorised' and 'unauthorised' absences. Authorised absence can include attending an approved educational activity.

School Leaving Age
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

Leave of Absence for Students
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

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.

Authorised Absence (see Appendix I – National Codes)
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 to be used in exceptional circumstance only(Code G or H)
- Exclusion (Code E)
- Responsibilities as a carer (Code C)
- Study Leave, Year 11 and above (Code S)
- Dual Registration (Code D)
- Bereavement (Code C)
- Special Occasions (Code C)
- Work experience (Code W)
- Planned whole or partial school closure (Code #)

In the case of the entire school requiring time out for a religious meeting, burial or wedding, the Lead CA should make written application to the National Support Office in advance of the occasion.

Authorising Absence
The campus should authorise absence only after careful consideration. A child's absence can only be authorised by the campus, and not by a parent. 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.

Local Authority
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
- Deletion from the campus register when the next school is not known

Police Power of Truants
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.

Parental Responsibility for School Attendance
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 attend regularly.

Absence due to an 'unavoidable' cause is not an offence, but parents have no right to authorise the absence of a registered student of compulsory age; this may only be done by the school.

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

Parents must explain all absenteeism with a note beforehand or immediately upon the student's return to the campus.

The education should be suitable to the Student's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the student may have.

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.

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.

Contacting Parents on the First Day of Absence
If a student is absent without explanation when the register is checked, school staff should, wherever possible, contact the parents that same day.

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.

Process for dealing with a child that goes missing in education
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

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

If the registers are taken in SIMS in the classroom you need a clear process in place for ensuring that the school office can comply with this procedure.

Dealing with Lateness
The school should be alert to emerging patterns of late arrivals. The register can be kept open for a period of 30 minutes after the beginning of registration. This can be extended in

certain circumstances such as bad weather or transport difficulties.

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

Improving Punctuality
The campus will record and follow up lateness in respect of students who arrive late on a regular basis.
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
- The procedures applied to lateness will never encourage a child not to come to school
- The importance of being in school promptly will be reinforced with parents and children

Where particular difficulties arise with a specific student, the following suggested actions can be applied:
- Allocating a responsibility for them first thing in the morning
- Implementing punctuality charts, with agreed rewards

DfE School Census Information
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.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION about Swaffham Campus relevant to the Attendance Policy and its implementation in the Campus.

SIMS information management system is used for both Attendance and Admissions Registers. SIMS reporting is used to monitor attendance, and contact will be made with parents when a pupil's attendance falls below 95% in any half term period, without a known good reason. Continual monitoring will be carried out on a weekly basis for students with less than 95% attendance. Parents may notify the school office by email (swaffhamcampus@focus-school.com), or by telephone, of absence due to illness or family emergency. Planned absences for medical appointments or special meetings, etc MUST be requested in writing (can be by email), and well in advance of the absence.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1: National Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings
Appendix 2: Admission Register Content
Appendix 3: Attendance as a Priority, Attendance Data and the School Census, Inspection of Attendance
Appendix 4: DfE Publication – School Attendance – Departmental Advice for Schools including Independent schools October 2014
Appendix 5: Monitoring Record

Associated Policies:
Data Protection Policy
Behaviour Management Policy
Child Protection and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Admissions Policy

LEGISLATION

List of Relevant Legislation:
- Education (Penalty Notices)(England)(Amendment)Regulations 2013
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment Regulations 2013)
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005
- Education (Pupil Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2002
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989

It is noted that for Independent Schools procedures are governed by the contract between the school and parent rather than by legislation.

ISSUED BY

Focus Learning Trust

Issue date: April 2016   Review date: April 2017

Version: 5

Signed by Chair of Board of Trustees: G Fentiman at a Trust Meeting on 4/5/16.

At a Trust Meeting on (Date):_

NATIONAL ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Educated off site (*not* 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 (*not* 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 (*not* 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
T	Gipsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age Students (not required to be in school)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	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	Not counted in possible attendances

	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)	
Z	Student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	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 |

ADMISSION REGISTER CONTENT

The following fields are a requirement for all Students and must be included in the School Admission Register (Roll Book):

- Date of Admission or re-admission (date, month and year)
- Full Name (Forename, Middle name, Surname)
- Gender: Male or Female
- Date of Birth (date, month and year)
- Date of Leaving
- Name and Address of all parents / guardians
- One Emergency Telephone number
- Name and Address of Last School attended, if any
- Date of monthly print out

If you are using SIMS you can print off an Admission Register (Roll Book) as follows:

You need to be in SIMS then ►Report ►Run Report ►Focus ►Student ►Admission Register (Roll Book).

The Admission Register (Roll Book) Report will be in 'Word' you will then be able to date the document before printing out.

Printed copies must be signed and dated by the Headteacher.

Back up will be done daily on the Central Server.

Attendance as a Priority

The Government has made it clear that school attendance is a priority. The threshold on persistent absence has been changed from 20% to 15%. Problems with literacy have been blamed as key factors in attendance and truancy. The drop in the benchmark is expected to encourage schools to intervene earlier in relation to poor attendance. The Department for Education has also declared the intention of releasing national figures showing the number of Students who miss 12.5%, 10% and 5% of lessons.

Local authorities and schools are no longer required to set targets for persistent absence and overall attendance. However, the Department for Education emphasises that unnecessary absence is unacceptable and must be prevented and tackled by schools. Absence will continue to be monitored closely via the school census. The Secretary of State's power to require an individual school to set absence targets where a school's absence is of particular concern is being retained.

Charlie Taylor, formerly the Secretary of State's expert advisor on behaviour, presented his review and recommendations for attendance in *Improving Attendance at School*. The Department for Education has indicated support for all the recommendations in this document.

His recommendations include:

- focusing more on improving attendance and less on truancy
- focusing less on distinctions between authorised and unauthorised absence and more on overall absence and persistent absence – as a result they are no longer reported separately
- strengthening the rules around term-time holidays
- publishing attendance data in reception
- the setting of specific timed targets, by Ofsted, for improving attendance in schools where it is low
- placing greater emphasis on ensuring good attendance in primary schools to prevent patterns of absence developing
- changing the system of fining to include the ability to recover fines directly from child benefit
- involving social care services in addressing underlying difficulties
- allowing academy chains, sponsors and individual schools to prosecute parents where their child's attendance is poor.

Attendance Data and the School Census

Governing bodies/proprietors of independent schools are required to complete the School Level Annual School Census on the third Thursday of January each year.
The data collected is used to:
- monitor student: adult ratios
- monitor the Government's social inclusion policy
- provide information about funding for local authorities and schools
- assist the student test registration process.

The information schools must provide includes the number of Students:
- with special educational needs, together with the types of special need
- who are eligible for free school meals
- whose first language is not English
- who are in care

Disability data is also now being voluntarily collected.

Inspection of Attendance
Attendance is inspected under the key judgment of the behaviour and safety of Students at the school.

Inspectors ask to see up-to-date attendance information. They evaluate the robustness with which the school monitors attendance. Overall and persistent absence and attendance rates for different groups are also considered. Inspectors observe punctuality in arriving at school and at lessons and the impact of the school's strategies to improve behaviour and attendance.
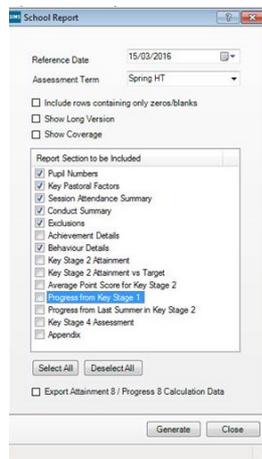
DfE Publication

School Attendance
Departmental Advice for Schools including Independent Schools
October 2014

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												