**Foveran School**



**Attendance Policy**

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**PUPIL ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

In recent years increasing attention has been paid to the issue of child protection and safety due to reported occasions where children have been seriously or fatally injured because of the inappropriate or criminal behaviours of adults.

Whilst it should be noted that there has been no such instance occurring within Aberdeenshire it is important that staff and parents do not become complacent and continue to work together to develop and improve upon existing arrangements for monitoring the care and welfare of all children and young people.

With that specific aim in mind, Aberdeenshire Education Learning and Leisure has asked all schools to implement a series of standard procedures to monitor pupil attendance and absence from school and to invite the co-operation of parents in making these changes work. All parents are asked to assist the staff in the schools which their children attend in the manner described below:

**Attendance and Absence Procedures**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. They are also responsible for ensuring the safety of their children on their journeys to and from school except whilst on school transport where Aberdeenshire Council has clear guidelines about pupil safety. Absence of pupils travelling on school transport must also be communicated to the bus company or (where known) the bus driver.

Regular and punctual attendance is linked closely to achievement and school staff wishes to work with parents to ensure that children can reach their full potential. The school is required by law to maintain an accurate record of the attendance and absence of each pupil and parents are requested to assist in this process by keeping the school informed if their child is to be absent for any reason.

Parents also have an obligation to collect their child promptly at 3.10pm. All parents should have a contingency plan for the collection of their child in the event of running late at home-time. For P1-3 pupils, the school should be made aware of any changes to collection arrangements to ensure the correct responsible adult has safely taken the child into their care.

**Unplanned Absence**

It is important to note that if a child does not arrive at school and there is no reasonable explanation provided for his/her absence then members of staff will be required to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of the individual child.

This will involve a phone call to the parent soon after 9.30am. Repeated calls will be made until the child’s whereabouts have been confirmed. If contact cannot be made the situation will be assessed and it may be thought necessary to inform the local social work department.

In order to avoid causing unnecessary concern for staff and parents the importance of good communication between home and school cannot be over-emphasised.

Parents are asked to assist school staff in the manner detailed below:

* If your child is unable to attend school through illness/other reason please telephone the school between 8:30am and 9:30am on the first day of his/her absence or send a signed note via a brother or sister where applicable.
* If your child is home for lunch and becomes unwell at lunchtime making them unable to return to school in the afternoon please telephone the school before the beginning of the afternoon session to inform a member of staff.
* When you contact the school it would be helpful if an indication could be given as to the child’s expected length of absence from school.
* On your child’s return to school a note should be provided explaining the reason for absence and confirming the periods of absence from the school. The note should be signed and dated.

**Planned Absences**

As part of Government Regulations we are required to record all absences as “authorised” or “unauthorised”. Authorised absences are due to illness or family bereavement and can also include time off to attend, e.g. sporting events or music exams.

* Under normal circumstances we do not send work home in the case of absence.
* For medical or dental appointments the teacher should be informed beforehand in writing. Children should always be collected and returned by an adult on these occasions. As far as possible such appointments should take place outwith the school day.

The school follows the Aberdeenshire Attendance Policy:

<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/19805/attendance-policy_april-2015.pdf>

Procedures for following up on pupil absence are based on the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 which requires by law that parents/carers ensure that children attend school regularly. The Home/School Liaison Officer has a key role to play, providing a vital link.

# Holidays during term time.

The Scottish Government has deemed that holidays taken during term time should be recorded as unauthorised absence unless there are special, exceptional circumstances. Should you wish to remove your child from school to attend a family holiday you must inform the Head Teacher. This will be recorded as unauthorised absence though there may at times be exceptional family circumstances previously discussed with the Head Teacher. Parents are advised to limit the number of holidays taken during term time, to minimise disruption to a child’s education. For annual holiday dates for Aberdeenshire schools please see the section at the back of this book, contact the school office or go to: <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/parents-carers/school-term-dates-and-in-service-days/>

# The Head Teacher at Foveran School welcomes feedback on this document.

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