

- At Nunnykirk we aim to work closely with parent/carers who have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly and is punctual for each session.
- This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for regular attendance of pupils at Nunnykirk, and that where there are concerns about attendance these are dealt with in an efficient and timely manner, and lessons are learned and acted upon.
- The formulation of this policy supports our school to effectively:
 - Identify pupils whose attendance is causing a concern
 - Provide for the immediate needs and requirements of these pupils
 - Ensure that adequate resources and arrangements are in place to secure improvement in attendance
 - Ensure lines of communication with parents/carers are in place if required
 - Activate a known plan of action with which all staff are familiar
- The policy is intended to be indicative, based on principles of good judgement, risk assessment and reduction, and effective communication.
- This policy is to be read in conjunction with other policies, especially our Safeguarding policy, which aims to:
 - Provide a safe and healthy environment for our school community, which includes service users, staff and all other people who come onto the premises of our school
 - Promote understanding of responsibilities in maintaining a healthy and safe environment
- The policy supports our Mission by directly impacting on the Physical and Emotional well-being of our community.

Reviewed by: Barry Frost (Head teacher)**(Governor)****Signed:****Date: 12th April 2018****Signed:****Date:****Introduction**

- Regular attendance is essential to every pupil's educational development and is clearly linked to progress.
- We recognise our part in assisting parent/carers to meet their legal obligation to ensure attendance. For example, we understand that for pupils to attend we need to create an environment that is safe and secure and welcoming so that all of our children and young people may achieve their full potential.
- As we are a small school which supports a range of needs including SEMH, we do not operate a minimum percentage of attendance for our pupils, preferring to use knowledge of each individual as the guide to response. In many cases in recent years, for example, our pupils have come to us with a history of non-attendance, and our aim is to improve this towards 100% attendance, over time if necessary.

Standard communications between home and school

- We maintain frequent communications with our Parents and carers. This usually helps identify reasons for any absence. The school has responsibility for authorising absences.
- Parent and carers are expected to notify the school regarding any non-attendance on the first day of absence. If follow up on the day by school staff provides no reason for this absence, the child involved will be marked as unauthorised. Persistent unauthorised absences from school may lead to further action.

- A note is also required when a pupil has to attend a medical or dental appointment in school time or when a child needs to be excused from physical exercise. Such appointments whenever possible should be made outside normal school hours.
- Pupil's leaving the school premises during the day for appointments must have authorisation from a member of SLT.

Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality, and responding to concerns

1. We ensure effective monitoring of attendance and punctuality through our registration procedures and analysis of attendance data.
2. The attendance register must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. No child should be entered as attending school unless they are seen by the staff member completing the registration process, or have received a confirmation from a colleague that they are in a known location. The latter applies, for example, where the young person may be in a sick room, an agreed 'bolt hole', with another member of staff, etc..
3. Senior staff must approve pupils' leave of absence and maintain close contact with parents/carers and the Head teacher if appropriate referrals are necessary to support pupil's causing concern.
4. Staff are required to register accurately and promptly using the registration system.
5. SLT and Office Manager monitor attendance routinely when processing registers.
6. Any member of staff may raise a concern, for example about attendance, patterns, or reasons, some or all of the following actions may be initiated:
 - (a) The Office Manager, Tutor, Learning Support Mentor, or a member of SLT will take steps to investigate
 - (b) Attendance issues will be discussed with parent/carers.
 - (c) Advice may be sought from Education or Social Care agencies.
 - (d) A formal letter will be written to parent/carers expressing concern
 - (e) Parent/carers will be invited into school to formally discuss issues of attendance
 - (f) The matter will be referred to health personnel for advice and guidance

First Day Calling

It is vital that registers are taken on time and are accurate. The system of first day calling is intended to improve attendance levels and decrease levels of absence especially those, which are unauthorised.

- A member of staff – usually the Office Manager of Learning Support Mentor - contacts the parent/carers of pupils who have not arrived in school.
- If contact is made, staff will update the register with the appropriate code. If contact has not been made a further attempt will be made the next day to ascertain why the child concerned has not attended school.
- If contact is still not made after day 2 then senior leaders are informed and a follow up letter may be sent.
- If no contact has been made and the pupil is still absent then a home visit may be made by school staff or a referral to Social Care instigated.

NB Registers are legal documents, which may be used in any court case involving absence from school they must be accurate