Our vision:

Achievement for All

Our mission:

To fulfil this through developing every child’s personality, abilities and talents to the full, to be the best they can be.

PRINCIPLES

At Sandgate School, we believe that all our students benefit from the education we provide, and therefore from regular school attendance. In order to achieve this we will take appropriate action to ensure that all students achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted on as quickly as possible.

Additionally, the school is committed to reflecting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in its policies and practice. The rights of the child considered to be especially relevant to this policy include:

Right 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Right 12: Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Right 18: Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments (the school) must support parents by giving them the help they need, especially if the child’s parents work.

Right 23: A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community

Right 28: Every child has the right to an education

EQUALITY IMPACT

This policy has been written considering the needs of the children and young people at the school and their barriers to attendance. It recognises that we are committed to good attendance for all to support learning and development. We acknowledge the reasons why this is compromised at times due to individual circumstance.

AIMS

School aims to ensure that:

* All students have an equal right and access to an education in accordance with the National Curriculum, or agreed alternative.
* No students will be deprived of their educational opportunities by, either their own absence or, that of other students.

It is recognised that:

* The majority of students want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peers, and to prepare themselves for their future life after school.
* A minority of students may need to be rewarded and supported at some stage to improve their desire to come to school.
* A minority of parents may need support to ensure their child is ready to come to school when school transport arrives.
* It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child’s attendance at school as required by law (ref section 7, 1996 Education Act).

**EXPECTATIONS**

Sandgate School expects that students will:

* Attend school regularly.
* Arrive on time and be prepared for school.
* Carry out any work provided by the school during an authorised leave period.

Sandgate School expects that parents will:

* Inform and work with school to manage the least disruption from health appointments.
* Inform a member of staff of any reason or problem that may hinder their child from coming to school.
* Fulfil their legal responsibilities and ensure their child attends school.
* Contact school, as soon as is practical, whenever their child is unable to come to school - ideally with a telephone call or email before 9.00.
* Seek permission from the school for any leave of absence. Please note that the Headteacher has the right to refuse requests for authorised leave of absence in accordance with LA guidelines.

Parents and students can expect the following from school:

* Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
* Early contact when a student is absent without explanation (1st day calling).
* Action on any attendance problem notified to the school.
* Referral of specific attendance issues to supporting agencies where appropriate.
* Annual overall attendance figures to be made available on request.

**POSITIVE APPROACHES TO PROMOTING ATTENDANCE**

We encourage attendance by:

* Providing a welcoming ethos.
* Ensuring lessons are exciting and challenging, but also clearly responsive to the wide range of student ability and need within the school.
* Providing regular opportunities to praise and celebrate the achievements of all students during lessons, in plenaries and in assemblies.
* Giving consistent, clear communication with parents and students about the importance of regular, prompt attendance.
* Setting targets for improved attendance, and sharing these with

Governors, parents and students.

The school responds to non-attendance by:

* Contacting parents on the first day of absence if no reason has been received.
* Contacting the parents again by phone or letter to enquire about the unexplained absence if there is no response to the first contact.
* Adding any comments as to the reason for absence onto the comments section on SIMS
* Inviting the parent/carer to visit school to work with school staff to help to resolve the difficulties where a pattern on non-attendance is emerging.

Where there is no response to school intervention and where the absence or a pattern of absence has persisted without explanation, the school will refer non-attendance to the Attendance Officer employed by the Kendal Collaborative Partnership (KCP) or SLF for further advice and possible intervention.

**HOLIDAY ABSENCE**

The school acknowledges that from time to time some parents will want to take their child out of school for holidays. Whilst we would not encourage this activity, it is within the Head teacher’s power to grant this, in which case a parent will need to show that there is an exceptional need for the holiday to take place outside of normal school holidays. Parents should be aware that fines can be issued should leave be denied and the parent still continue with the trip.

**ABSENCE FOLLOWING MEDICAL TREATMENT**

It is acknowledged that in a school such as Sandgate, a higher than usual percentage of students may undergo medical treatment during the year. Staff will advise parents that appropriate school work/activities can be provided for students to do at home, providing they can support its completion. For absences of longer than 2 weeks, an arrangement around appropriate work will be set with parental consent.

**POOR ATTENDANCE**

If a child has unsatisfactory attendance, a member of SLT in conjunction with the teacher will contact parents to discuss the issue. A decision may be taken to address the absence as part of the Early Help system to target the issue. In this instance, other professionals may become involved to offer the support needed for the child or the family. The EHCP key worker will also be involved in these meetings.

Guidance may be sought from the Local Authority as to whether a fixed penalty notice should be issued, but this will always be a last resort as we would always hope to resolve the issue by other means.

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Class teachers are responsible, in the first instance/first day for ensuring that a phone call home has been made if no explanation, or unclear explanation, of absence has been received at the start of the day. However, this task can be delegated to a teaching assistant or administrative assistant as appropriate.

Findings of any phone calls or discussions are noted on SIMS to give a clear picture of their absence.

The Headteacher and SLT scrutinise attendance regularly and works with class teachers to support them in their discussions with parents to improve the pattern of attendance. The Deputy Headteacher keeps records of attendance and chases up any issues of persistent absence where reasons for absence are unexplained.

Other relevant policies available in school

**Behaviour Policy**

**Curriculum Policy**

**Assessment and Moderation Policy**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Anti-bullying Policy**

**Inclusive Learning Policy and Guidelines**

**SEN Policy**