

Southmead Primary School

Attendance Policy

2016/2017



POLICY FOR	Attendance and Punctuality
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COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE	Children, Achievement and Community
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REVIEWED BY	
COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE	
GOVERNORS SIGNATURE	
HOW THE GB WILL MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF THE POLICY	

Our Aim

As a school we aim to promote excellent attendance and punctuality, ensuring our pupils receive a full-time education that maximises their opportunities to realise their true potential. To encourage this, we have routines in place for monitoring the attendance and punctuality of our pupils which helps to identify any patterns which may need addressing.

Parents and Carers should be fully aware of this policy and the procedures in place relating to absences and repeated lateness, and the impact these have on a child's learning. Regular, punctual attendance is essential for helping children to achieve their full potential by not missing out on any education or events in school. It is the responsibility of school staff, Parents and Carers to work together to ensure this full potential is attained through good attendance.

Our School Day

Years 1-6

The playground gates are opened at 8:40am. Children are expected to be lining up in their class lines by 8:45am ready to be led into class by the teacher for 8.50am to be registered.

Registration closes at 8.55am.

Early Years

Fulltime Nursery and Reception children start at 8.45am and finish at 3:25pm. Gates are opened at 8:40am; children will be handed over to a member of staff at their child's classroom door.

Parents must not leave their child unattended.

At the end of the day the gate is opened at 3.15pm and the children are collected from their child's teacher.

Part-time Nursery:

Morning children: 8.45am-11.45am

Afternoon children: 12:25-3:25pm

Absences

Pupils are expected to attend school unless there is an exceptional reason for absence. Absences are recorded in two ways; Authorised or Unauthorised. An authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation provided as satisfactory for the absence. An unauthorised absence is when the school has either not been provided with any explanation or the reason given is not deemed acceptable for missing education. Keeping a child off school regularly for minor reasons such as having a slight cold or headache is not acceptable and may result in the school requesting medical evidence confirming your visit (dated appointment card) or copy of a prescription given as a result of a visit to the doctor.

How our school encourages attendance:

- Weekly announcement of Attendance and Punctuality winners who get to keep our Southmead Attendance Ted and Punctuality Pup in their classrooms for the week.
- Publish weekly class Attendance & Punctuality winners as well as levels of attendance across the school.
- Termly individual certificates for 100% attendance.
- Annual reward for achieving 100% attendance for the full academic year.

Educational Welfare

Wandsworth Schools have an allocated Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) who works with schools and outside agencies to ensure children of statutory school age have maximum access to education through regular attendance at school or otherwise (i.e. attending alternative provision). EWOs provide support to pupils, parents/carers and schools to achieve improvements in attendance. The officer checks regularly on the attendance and punctuality of every pupil. If a child is absent without a good reason, the officer may contact the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and to help you to ensure the child attends school regularly.

As a school we will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately
- Pupils attendance and punctuality is monitored regularly
- Class attendance statistics are published in the weekly newsletter for parents to see (this is also available on the school website)
- Regular Attendance panel meetings are held to monitor poor attendance and punctuality.

Parent / Carer responsibilities:

- ensure the child attends school on time, prepared for the school day every day of term unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- to be aware of their legal responsibilities of ensuring their child receives fulltime education.
- avoid medical / dental appointments during the school day where possible.
- to bring children to the office if late to ensure they are signed in and provide reason for lateness.
- to contact the school office on the first day of absence by either telephone call, leaving a voicemail or coming into school to inform of the reason their child is unable to attend school.
- to work with the school and EWO in monitoring lateness/attendance if requested.
- to discuss planned absences with the school in advance and request leave of absence by filling out a form for exceptional circumstances as far in advance as possible; although it is at the Head Teachers discretion whether this will be authorised or not.

Process for Monitoring Absence

If a pupil does not attend school:

- If no reason has been provided by the Parent/Carer by 9:30am on the first day of absence, the school will attempt to make contact with them that day by telephone call or voicemail/text message requesting contact. If this issue becomes persistent, Parents/Carers will be advised that a referral to the EWO will be made.
- Each week an absence report is made to the Head Teacher with detail of each pupil absence for the week along with any information provided by the parent/carer.
- Pupil's attendance is monitored carefully throughout the school year by both the school and the EWO. Those whose attendance is below 90% will be referred to the EWO and invited into school for a School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting to discuss their child's attendance and how it can be improved. Failure to comply with the expectations set by the EWO may result in further action.

Punctuality

Punctuality is an important life skill. Lateness is recorded and reported to the Head Teacher. This includes late arrival at the start of the school day as well as late collection after school. If a child has not been collected by 4pm and no contact has been or can be made with the parents/carers, Children and Family Services will be contacted.

The beginning of the school day is important for children to settle and be made aware of what will be happening that day. If a pupil is late they may:

- Miss vital parts of the lesson and information given
- Disrupt the class lesson and other pupils

-Find it embarrassing to walk into class knowing the other children are already in lesson. The fear of embarrassment may encourage absence.

The time late pupils arrive to school is recorded and reported to the Head Teacher each week and is monitored and followed up accordingly. If a child is persistently late, the parent/carers will be invited in to meet with the Head Teacher regarding the issue. Parents who find it difficult to get their child in on time are encouraged to approach the school for advice.

Periods of absence during Term time and Penalty Notices:

School holiday dates are published on the website, holidays must not be taken during term time, this will more than likely result in parents/carers of the child being fined. Parents/carers planning to keep children off school for a period of time must fill in an application form for 'leave of absence' which can be requested at the school office. It is at the Head Teachers discretion whether the application is authorised or not depending on the circumstances. If the request is unauthorised and the child is still kept off school, the school will have to refer them over to the EWO to commence the process of issuing a penalty notice to the parents/carers. Penalty notices may be imposed on parents/carers for failing to ensure that their child of statutory school age attends school regularly, or for the child's absence being unauthorised by the school. For family medical emergencies that require children to be absent from school, for example to travel abroad, requests may be authorised if evidence is provided by parents (doctor's note/proof of travel etc).

The legal action may include:

- Issuing Penalty Notices: Parent receives a Notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So if there are two children the total penalties may be up to £480.
- Prosecuting parents for unauthorised absence: Education Act 1996 s.444(1) – magistrates can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, add costs and impose Parenting Orders.
- Prosecuting parents for persistent unauthorised absence: Education Act 1996 s.444 (1A) – magistrates can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and/or impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be published on the school website for parents/carers to access.