



Southfields Primary School

• Good Learners • Accepting • Respect • Kindness

Attendance Policy

Summer 2022

1. Introduction

World class teachers, high standards in curriculum, behaviour and attendance are critical for success. Children are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Southfields Primary School will endeavour to encourage all children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support regular attendance. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make Southfields Primary School a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

1.1 We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting and rewarding good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- A richer, longer average school week, which makes the most effective use of time in school and ensures children enjoy a rounded education
- Using data to effectively to protect vulnerable children.

Children will not achieve their potential in a school with poor standards of attendance and behaviour. Southfields Senior Leadership team are responsible for setting the culture for their school and making sure that all children attend school and learn in a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment, with high expectations of what every child can achieve. Securing the fundamentals of curriculum, behaviour and attendance at Southfields Primary School is vital to achieving our literacy and numeracy missions.

2. Encouraging and enabling good attendance.

2.1 The most vital part of encouraging good attendance is to ensure that the school is a place to which the children want to come; that the school is a place where the children are treated with respect and feel valued; a place where their needs are recognised and are being addressed; a place where all children can experience success within a rich, relevant and diversified curriculum.

2.2 Children alone cannot ensure their regular and punctual attendance at school. From the outset, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the work of the school and to build and support their children's enthusiasm for attending school.

2.3 All staff make children aware of the importance of good attendance and children are praised and rewarded (see section 6 for more detail)

2.4 Each child's attendance record is shared with the parents as part of annual written reports and at Parent Consultations, attendance is discussed.

It follows that individual records of attendance are kept and are passed onto subsequent schools.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

4.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

4.3 The Lead Learning Mentor

The Lead Learning Mentor is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher and DSL
- Works with Local Authority Attendance Officer to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Record all attendance concerns/absences on CPOMS

4.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office through SIMS.

4.5 Role of parents:

Parents have an essential role in ensuring their child's good attendance.

We ask parents to:

- Establish good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing the children that good attendance and punctuality is important.
- Praise and reward good attendance, even small successes, e.g., getting ready quickly, even if resisting going to school.
- Talk regularly with their child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to want to attend and learn if they feel supported and their anxieties are listened to.
- Contact the school by phone as soon as possible to say why their child is absent, and when they are expected to return.
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness.
- If appropriate, arrange for a friend to take a child to school if a sibling is sick.
- Avoid taking holidays in school time.
- Ensure that wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of the school day.
- Know routines of the school day to avoid issues, e.g. ensuring children have their P.E. kits on the right days.
- Establish a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle.

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register through SIMS and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50 each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.10am
The register for the second session will be taken at the end of lunchtime and will be kept open for 10 minutes.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the main school office:

02476 226810 or the pastoral team office **02476 633921**

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (after the gates have closed):

Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Ongoing punctuality issues will be addressed through a meeting with the Local Authority Attendance Officer, a member of the admin team and the Lead Learning Mentor.

5.5 Following up absence/ unauthorised absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by calling. If no contact is made the absence will be recorded as unauthorised on CPOMS.
- If the child is absent for a second consecutive day, a home visit will be undertaken.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

6. Children Missing in Education

KCSIE 2021 states; Children missing from education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation. It is important the school or college's response to children missing from education supports identifying such abuse and also helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as on a child in need or child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where going missing from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Further information and support, includes: schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the Department's statutory guidance: [Children missing education - GOV.UK \(\[www.gov.uk\]\(https://www.gov.uk\)\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612212/Children_missing_education_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by Southfields Primary School to establish their whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to Coventry City Council

Reasonable steps to be taken by school staff include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts (parents are asked to provide a minimum of two emergency contacts in the event of children not arriving at school without prior notification and also for other emergency purposes).
- Letters home
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family

All contacts and outcomes will be recorded on the pupil's file

6.1 Removal of a child's name from the register

The circumstances under which registered pupils can be deleted from the admission register are set out in Regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995.

The school will adopt the guidance and procedures in the LA "missing person" policy. This includes:

- Complete a Children Missing from Education (CME) form under the following criteria
- A child has missed 10 sessions (5 days) of absence where the school does not know the child's whereabouts
- To take the child off roll after 20 days (4 weeks) of absence

7. Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events which are unavoidable and which documentary evidence suggests are essential. These remain at the headteachers discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see section 5.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

7.2 Reducing persistent absence.

Reducing persistent absence is done by:

- Monitoring attendance data and implementing action plans in response to persistent absence, triggering multi agency meetings where appropriate.
- Requests for medical information or information from other services
- Use of local authority enforcement processes and procedures
- Home visiting.

- Direct work with children and parents to address root causes of absences.

7.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

8. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Each class has their attendance 'score on the door' which is visible to parents
- Display of each classes attendance (weekly)
- Class with the highest weekly attendance receive:
 - EYFS – Tickles the tiger for the week
 - KS1 and KS2 – Attendance trophy



The class with the highest attendance each term will have a party to celebrate their achievement.

Children that achieve 100% every term will have the opportunity to win a prize from the treasure chest.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

The Lead Learning Mentor at Southfields Primary School monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

The head teacher reports on attendance to the board of governors every term.

The rates of attendance are reported in the monthly newsletters published on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority of DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the headteacher and DSL. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/27062/attendance_faqs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

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