



## **Attendance Policy**

### **Introduction:**

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any disability. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the available educational opportunities. Sunningdale School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote regular attendance of all its pupils. It accepts that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to under achievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to socialise with his/her peers successfully.

### **Aims:**

- Sunningdale School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential including those who are recognised as vulnerable.
- To meet the statutory requirements.
- To ensure all children including those who may be migratory or 'missing' are identified and LA guidelines followed to ensure these children access appropriate education.
- To work with the LA Attendance Team and nominated School Attendance Team (Attendance 100) for support and advice.
- To support learning at home when a child is not able to attend due to complex health needs through the use of the school's Attendance 'Home Visitor' and Specialist School Nurse.
- To strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels nurtured and secure.
- To recognise and value the efforts of pupils and parents in achieving improved attendance.
- To work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.
- To encourage parents to obtain out of hours medical appointments where possible and return their child to school as soon as possible following an appointment.
- To support pupils who have been hospitalised and wish to return to school within an agreed phased return and to utilise parents/carers/professionals support if and when required.

### **What is expected of parents?**

- To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence (hospitalisation) or on the first day of absence.

- To work closely with the school when required and with Attendance 100/LA attendance team when there are issues with regards to attendance.
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holiday will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- To submit all requests for holiday absence to the Headteacher on completion of the appropriate form.
- To ensure children are ready for the school transport when it arrives or attends school on time.
- To ensure pupils are dressed and prepared appropriately for school on a daily basis.

#### **What is expected of the school:**

- To work to improve the overall percentage of pupils who attend school and reduce absence rates by
  - Reviewing attendance data and tracking pupils on a half termly basis.
  - Reviewing those pupils who have hit a 'trigger' and set actions to improve future attendance.
  - Review attendance 'trends' across specified cohorts on a monthly basis.
  - Ensuring attendance is given a high profile as part of the school ethos including flexible attendance rather than no attendance, to have greatest impact on learning outcomes.
  - Making attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors by
- ❖ Promoting good practice for parents/carers by providing relevant information linked to LA and school policy.
- ❖ Attendance Group to meet half termly to discuss those children who have hit 'triggers'. This group has representation from Governors, school, health & AT100.
- ❖ Providing a termly attendance report to governors.
- ❖ Ensuring staff are aware of attendance issues related to individual pupils.
- ❖ Working in conjunction with the appropriate senior leader to monitor the impact of attendance on pupil progress.

#### **School Leader's Role:**

- To achieve maximum attendance for all pupils.
- When an unauthorised absence occurs, dependent upon the length and the reason the school has the option to request the LA to issue a Fixed Penalty as an alternative to presenting the matter to the court.
- The Supreme Court Judgement clarifies that there is no automatic right to absence from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time and it remains the decision of the Head teacher as to whether the absence is authorised.
- Head Teachers retain the ability to authorise leave in accordance with the Education Regulations-England (2006). The school must act within the law.
- The Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. If the leave is granted the HT will determine the number of school days a child can be absent for.

- The school can only consider leave of absence requests which are made by the ‘resident’ parent. Each application will be considered on a case to case basis and on its own merits.
- If a leave of absence is refused then it will be expected that the child will attend school. If the child fails to attend school the absence will be deemed to be ‘unauthorised’ and may then result in legal action.

### **Procedures and Practice:**

The school will work within a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

- Statutory registration periods daily.
- Set time for closure of registration (9.30 am).
- Telephone call to parents from Administrative Assistant (CC) by 9.45 am if no contact received from parent/carers with regards to child’s absence.
- Contact between school and parents to ascertain the nature and length of the absence. Regular updates will be requested.
- Contact parent/carers if a child is consistently late for school.
- Defined roles and responsibilities for staff dealing with transport and attendance - transport duty staff, Administrative Assistant, class staff.
- Administrative Assistant will contact Celia Wright HT if pupil absence is cause for concern. This may occur daily. CW will signpost if required to Jan Patterson (Family Partnership Advisor), Attendance 100, Leanne Watson (Attendance Home Visitor/HLTA).
- Accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents established on entry and updated annually.
- Half termly review of attendance by ‘Attendance Group’ (Celia Wright: HT, Designated Governor, Attendance 100, Attendance Home visitor, Administrative Assistant, Parent Partnership Advisor, School Nurse).
- To monitor the attendance of identified vulnerable pupils such as LAC or those who are subject to a child protection plan, including the identification and analysis of trends and to follow up any absences that are identified as a cause for concern.
- Attendance Team referral and recording system used when appropriate.
- Good attendance highlighted to both pupils and parents.

*The school allows a flexible system to operate for pupils who are unwell to continue to attend school, on advice from the Consultant Paediatrician. School nurses support these pupils with the provision of nursing and care facilities. This allows a child to be in school when they would otherwise have to remain at home. Parents may accompany their child in particular instances.*

Responsibility	1 <sup>ST</sup> DAY OF ABSENCE	3 <sup>RD</sup> DAY OF ABSENCE	CONTINUED ABSENCE
PARENTS	Notify school		Parents to keep school informed
SCHOOL		School make caring call	

### **Specific roles and responsibilities**

#### **Administrative Assistants:**

- To standardise and record authorised/unauthorised absences using SIM's with guidance from Senior Leaders (CC).
- To work within the Attendance Group on a half termly basis and utilise follow up procedures if there are any attendance concerns on a daily basis if required (CC)
- To liaise with other provisions and pupils are registered as dual placements and collate attendance information (CC)
- To update attendance/absence advice information and send to new parents (HS)
- To record and collate information from pupil holiday request forms (CC).

### **School Staff:**

- To maintain accurate registers of pupil attendance and return to the Administrative Assistant according to agreed school procedure.
- To inform the Administrative of pupil medical appointments and reasons for absence as relayed in the home/school diary.
- To track those children who have previously 'hit triggers' and inform the HT of any on-going concerns as they arise.

### **Monitoring and Review:** **Is the policy working ?**

- Have the attendance figures improved ?
- Are absence rates declining ?
- Are tracking systems in place that identify that support improved attendance ?
- Are school and home working in partnership to follow the set procedures outlined in the policy?
- Do newsletters include attendance updates ?
- Are parents receiving regular information regarding attendance targets and absence advice ?
- Are Governors updated termly on the attendance data ?