



Send Church of England Primary School

Pupil Attendance Policy

About this Policy	
Date last review	September 2021
Date next review	September 2024
Review period	3 Years
Statutorily required?	No
Approval body	SLT
Reviewed by	SLT
Governor's committee responsible	Learning & Achievement Committee

We believe that God's love is at the heart of our school. Christian values underpin all that we do, giving us all the strength and determination to make our school a safe, happy and inspirational place to learn. We believe that childhood matters: it is short, precious and cannot be repeated. We are fully committed to ensuring that every child reaches their full potential, develops a love of learning and becomes a resilient, curious and independent member of society

1. Introduction

Send C of E Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. In order to achieve this we aim to encourage all pupils to attend regularly.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

2. Legal Requirements

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the DfE. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

If a parent takes their child out of school without authorisation from the Head Teacher, this will result

in the absence being shown as 'unauthorised' and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued (with a fine) or a referral being made to the Education Welfare Service and legal action being taken against them.

3. School Procedures

Any child who is absent from the school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Executive Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

An unauthorised absence is recorded when no reason for the absence has been provided or if the absence is deemed to be without a valid reason which may include:

- Parents and carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence
- Holidays in term time without prior approval

4. Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50am and start of nursery at 8.50am. The registers open at 8.45am and will close at 8.55am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation, i.e., school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will be at 1pm and the registers will close at 1.05pm.

5. First Day Absence

On the first day of any absence and on any further days of absence, parents and carers are asked to contact the school by 9am by email or telephone to report the absence. This is recorded in the school office for staff to know how to classify the absence in the register. Where children are absent and there has been no contact with the school, the office will send a text message to the primary contact for the child by 9.30am to ascertain the reason for absence. Parents and carers will be asked in this automated message to contact the school by 9.45am to explain the reason for their child's absence. If the school does not hear from parents and carers by 9.45am, the office will seek to telephone all known contacts for the child until they have a response. This will enable the school to be certain about the child's whereabouts, safety and wellbeing. Should there be no known reason for the child's absence by 10.00am, office staff will pass this information to a senior leader who will take action as appropriate.

6. Continuing Absence

Where there is an extended absence, further contact will be made with the parents (after 3 days) to ensure pastoral care is exercised and to determine if there are any absence issues that need to be addressed.

7. Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

8. Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the administrator with responsibility for attendance to be aware of and bring attention to any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent(s). If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the Educational Welfare Officer to seek further advice.

9. A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

10. Absence Notes

Parents are requested to email, telephone or write a note explaining absence. The reason given for absence will be recorded electronically using SIMS. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil that may require further investigation, the records will be referred to.

11. Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education, e.g. through regular reminders in newsletters and informal conversations at the school gate between teacher and parent.

12. Leave of Absence

Holidays during term time are actively discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school may consider authorising absence in exceptional circumstances but parents must apply in advance for permission.

The following are examples of unacceptable reasons for absence:

- Family birthday surprises
- A holiday booked for you by kind grand parents
- cheaper flights, opportunity for a child to have 'experience of a foreign country.'
- Where workplaces impose restrictions on holiday dates, which result in applications for term time absence, unless a letter is submitted from the employer to validate the request.

In line with the guidance from the DfE, holidays during SATs will not be authorised.

Leave of absence for other reasons, such as attending a family funeral, will be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher. Parents should give details of the reasons for the leave of absence when seeking permission.

13. Penalty Notices

Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the leave of absence is without the permission of the Executive Headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a penalty notice if the leave of absence is taken.

14. Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year and the annual absence figures will be reported regularly to Governors.