

	Attendance and Punctuality Policy	
This policy was ratified by the Full Governing Body: November 25	Coordinator: E Ashcroft	
Chair of Governors: Mrs Julie Rogers-Hussey	Review Date: November 27	
Head Teacher: <i>E. Ashcroft</i>		

All information that is collected and stored relating to this policy is subject to the school's Data Protection Policy.

Aim:

Education provides a means of advancement for all young people to improve their life chances. Regular school attendance is a legal requirement for those registered at a school. Without it, the efforts of the best teachers and schools will come to nothing.

Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines that educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and can result in pupils being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Organisation:

The class register is to be completed every morning and every afternoon. Registers open at **8.50am** and close at **9:00am**. Pupils arriving between **9:00am** and **9.30am** will be marked as late.

Any latecomers will be marked in the register appropriately: -

- L - late **9:00am up until 9.20am** classed as present
- U - **after 9:20am** classed as unauthorised absence

Continued lateness will be reported and discussed with the parents. Adults must sign latecomers into the electronic signing in/out system that is in the main school entrance.

Absences must be recorded by staff using the correct absences and attendance code as issued by the Department for Education.

Parents and carers should report an absence either by telephone, in person or by emailing contactus@southendinfant.com.

As a first day response, the office staff will telephone parents. If the absence is for a known, long term illness, there is no requirement to call the office each day (this is after agreement with office staff).

Points of Identification & Monitoring:

Children Whose Attendance is Below 95%:

At the beginning of each term the school will identify:

- Children whose attendance has fallen below 95% for the previous term **and** for the current year.

- The registers will be analysed to find the reasons and patterns. An initial attendance concern letter will be emailed to parents/carers to set a target of between 95 - 100% for the next term.

Children Whose Attendance is Below 90%:

- This is classed as 'persistent absence' and a letter will be emailed to parents/carers with the expectation that this improves to at least 95% the following term.
- Children who continue to have persistent absence, after meeting with the headteacher, will be referred to the Educational and Inclusion Partnership Team at the local authority.
- Records will be kept to ensure that we can check for improvements of deterioration in attendance.
- We review each case on its own merit to consider any extenuating circumstance beyond unauthorized term time holidays e.g. illness.

The intention is that by working with families any attendance issue will improve. However, if this is not the case at any point, the advice of the Inclusion Officer may be sought.

Our school recognises a child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Our school will follow the details set out in the NSCB procedure 'Children Missing Education' to report and respond to incidences of children missing from school. We will also comply with the guidance in the current Keeping Children Safe in Education document. If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan any absences must be reported immediately and these will be investigated.

Leaving During The School Day:

No child will be allowed to leave the premises during school time unless collected by a parent or responsible adult (parent /carer will need to phone through about this beforehand). All departures must be logged with the school office. Evidence of a medical or dental appointment may be requested.

Children Not Collected After School Hours:

There are rare occasions when perhaps due to an emergency, parents are not able to collect their children promptly from school, or make arrangements for their collection at the end of the school day. In accordance with Northamptonshire County Council policy, if your child is not collected, the school will make enquiries to find the parents using the emergency contact numbers provided. If after one hour it has not been possible to contact parents/carers then the Headteacher will contact the Police and/or the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (Social Services) to inform them of a possible problem.

Sickness:

If a child has diarrhea and/or vomiting illness our school will request that they return to school 48 hours after the last period of vomiting or diarrhea. (This is taken from the 'Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and Other Child Care Settings Document' from the Health Protection Agency)

If your child is absent from school due to illness for 4 or more consecutive days, then confirmation of illness must be received from a Doctor/Medical Professional. If your child is off due to a planned operation or hospitalisation then the letter must be seen by the school beforehand, or if this is not possible after discharge.

Leave and Holidays in Term time:

There is no law that gives entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. The Head Teacher would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional. Parents can be fined by the local authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without the consent of the school.

Requests for leave must be given using the 'Exceptional Absence Form' to the Head Teacher and if necessary a meeting will be arranged to discuss the exceptional circumstance.

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only. Our School agrees to follow the law, in such that the provision for the Head Teacher to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance. Exceptional circumstances **could** include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside the above, the Head Teacher must liaise with other schools where other siblings attend.
6. Absence due to religious observance will be authorised, but the day must be:
 - exclusively be set apart for religious observance and
 - set apart by the parents' religious body (not the parents).

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN):

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all children have a consistent attendance in excess of 95% with a school target of 96% as a minimum. We are committed to working with families to achieve this. However, where this target is consistently missed it may be deemed appropriate for the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Triggers for the fixed Notice Penalty will be:

- 10 sessions (**5 days**) of unauthorised absence **in the last 10 weeks**
- **5 consecutive days** of unauthorised absence
- If 2 FPN have been issued previously in the child's school career, this could result in court action.

It is important that parents understand that the initial fixed penalty notice of £80 is issued to each parent for each child. A two-parent family with two children would be fined £320. If two Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued previously in the child's school career, this could result in court action.

The Local Authority's decision to issue a fixed Penalty Notice is based on information submitted by the school.

Responsibility:

The overall responsibility of monitoring pupils' attendance lies with the Head Teacher. The Attendance Officer and Office staff support the Head Teacher in the collection of attendance data and producing appropriate responses.

This policy will be reviewed every two years to assess its implication and effectiveness.