

Attendance Policy

Sutton Manor Primary School

Title of Policy [Attendance Policy](#)

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Section: [School](#)

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Attendance Policy

At Sutton Manor we believe that

Regular attendance at school lays the foundations for achievement for the pupils and for the school as a whole. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The law states that:

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. (DFE guidance November 2016).

Introduction

Sutton Manor Primary School aims to encourage and assist all children in attaining excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. This can only be done through a positive partnership between the staff, the children and the parents.

At Sutton Manor attendance is monitored rigorously

- School has the benefit of an Educational Welfare officer, who visits school weekly to monitor attendance.
- The Head Teacher and Office Administrator monitor absence monthly
- The Learning Mentor makes First Day Responses calls providing feedback to staff.

Rights and responsibilities

The government expects:

- Schools and local authorities to:
 - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

(DFE guidance November 2016)

The Admission and Attendance Registers

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on both registers.

Children at Risk of Missing Education

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- Have been permanently excluded.

The EDUCATION ACT 1996 section 7 sets out the law for school attendance.

Our School Responsibilities

Sutton Manor Primary School staff will set a good example in matters of punctuality and attendance. The school will work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern.

Pupils

Pupils will ensure that they attend regularly and on time.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child's regular and prompt attendance. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible: we expect this to be on the first day of absence. In the case of illness the nature of the illness and the expected return date to school should be notified. Parents should provide written confirmation as soon as the child returns to school.

Governors

The Governors are responsible for determining the length of the two sessions, morning and afternoon and the length of the break (lunchtime). The governing body has the power to revise the length of the school day as it sees fit. As part of their statutory safeguarding duties the governors monitor attendance and the number of exclusions termly.

Registration

The register must be taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session (morning: 8.55am, afternoon: 1.15pm KS2 and 1.00pm KS1 And EYFS). Registration is a legal requirement. A child may be marked as late if they arrive in class before the register has been officially closed.

Once the register has been closed, unless there is a reasonable explanation, the child may be registered as an unauthorised absence. Parents of children who are regularly late may be committing an offence by failing to ensure “efficient, full-time education”.

The computerised official register will be printed at least once a month and, annually. Registration sheets will be bound and archived for three years.

Absence

The school operates a first day response so that if a child is absent at morning registration the Admin Assistant, or other member of staff, will attempt to make contact with the home that day; unless a message about the absence has been received.

By law only the Headteacher can approve a reason for absence. To assist parents we feel it is helpful to state what reasons for absence may be acceptable. Absence will be authorised if:

- The child is ill. Where prolonged absence or a pattern emerges the pupil may be referred for a medical.
- The child is involved in a religious festival or observance by the religious body to which the pupil or their parent/s belong.
- There is a family bereavement.
- The pupil is given leave by the head teacher or other person authorised to do so by the governing body.
- The child is a Traveller and the conditions as stated in the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (6) are met.
- The pupil is attending an interview for a place at another school.
- The pupil is attending the Pupil Referral Service.
- The pupil is attending a medical or dental appointment that could not be made out of school hours. Appointment card to be produced prior to appointment. If an emergency appointment –evidence to be produced on return to school.

- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion, **not** a birthday.
- The pupil is involved in off-site activities, either school led or particular to the individual such as a music exam.

Absences will be unauthorised if:

- No explanation is forthcoming
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil stays at home to mind the house or care for a relative (there may be exceptional circumstances when authorisation would be granted).
- The pupil is shopping in school hours
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions such as birthdays, or the purchasing of shoes etc.
- The pupil goes on holiday without permission or the parents seek retrospective approval on their return

Holidays

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term-time and do not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued if a child is absent due to a holiday. DFE guidance 2013 stated that Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

Procedures for following up absence

The school operates a first day response so that if a child is absent at morning registration the Admin Assistant or other member of staff, will attempt to make contact with the home that day; unless a message about the absence has been received.

If a pupil is absent for more than 3 consecutive days without an explanation and the school has been unable to make contact the Attendance officer will inform the EWO who will then make a home visit.

If a pupil is persistently, or intermittently, absent the Head teacher/ EWO will write to the parents and invite them to attend a meeting at the school.

If a pupil returns to school after a period of absence and fails to bring a note or if the explanation offered by a note is unsatisfactory the Head/Class teacher will write to the parents.

If a pupil is persistently absent, or late, and the school's efforts to bring about an improvement have failed the situation will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Notes from parents will be initialled and dated by the Class teacher and kept with the register.

All messages regarding illness will be kept in the register.

All pupils arriving late at school will be recorded in the Late Book.

Penalty Notices

EWO will work with the school to implement the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA Officers, Headteachers (and Deputy Headteachers authorised by them) and the Police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and Section 103 and 105 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 set out the conditions when Penalty Notices can be issued.

Penalty Notices are fines imposed on parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or a place where alternative provision is provided.

St Helens Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct sets out the criteria to trigger a Penalty Notice.

From the 1st September 2013, Penalty Notices time lines have changed to **£60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.**

If full payment has not been received at the end of the 28 days the parent can be prosecuted for the original offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a Penalty Notice. If the Penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period only the Local Authority can make the decision to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, or withdraw the Notice.

Further sources of information

Relevant legislation on www.legislation.gov.uk

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999

- The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006

Further useful information for parents can be found on

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-36277836>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581539/School_attendance_parental_responsibility_measures_statutory_guidance.pdf

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Signed by Chair/Vice Chair of Governors _____ Date _____