

SOUTHOVER C E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy



May 2024

This is an agreed policy for Lewes Schools:
Priory School, South Malling CE Primary and Nursery School, Southover CE Primary, St.
Pancras RC Primary, Western Road Primary, Wallands Community Primary and Nursery School
and Iford and Kingston Primary School.

Southover CE Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Southover School by:

- ❖ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ❖ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Any problems with a child's regular attendance should be discussed with the school, the parents and the child.

Every half-day absence, known as one session, has to be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**.

Authorised absences are defined as mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- ❖ parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- ❖ holiday in term time
- ❖ truancy before or during the school day
- ❖ absences which have never been properly explained
- ❖ children who arrive at school too late to get a mark in the school register

The school may not authorise leave of absence for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for emergency medical appointments which must be in school time.

Attendance issues

The school recognises the importance of working together with parents in resolving any problems there may be in a child attending school regularly. The Local Education Authority's Education Welfare Officers work with schools to try and resolve individual difficulties parents and children may be experiencing and also regularly monitors the school's attendance data.

In instances where the school is unable to resolve attendance difficulties and where a child's attendance has failed to improve these, the school will consult with the Attendance Support team and may use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences (also see table below):

Reporting an absence

Parents are requested to report the reason for a child's absence by telephoning the school office **before 8.45am** on the first day of the child's absence and then each day they will not be in school.

If a child has not arrived at school by 9.15am the administrative assistant/attendance officer will contact the child's parent/carer. Should contact not be made with the parent/carer by 10am the administrative assistant will endeavour to ring the emergency telephone numbers on the child's record on Arbor.

Parents should ensure that the school is kept informed of any changes, particularly with mobile phone numbers.

Lateness

Pupils arriving late, after the close of the register (after 8.55am) must report to the school office to be registered. A reason for late arrival must be given to the office which will be logged for reference.

Request for "leave" of absence in term time

Parents requesting "leave" of absence in term time for either unavoidable or exceptional reasons should complete an absence request form available from the school office or information stand and return to school at least 14 days before the requested absence date.

The outcome of this request will be notified to parents within 5 working days, of application.

The school will follow ESCC's Code of Conduct (Sept 2013). This may result in a request from the school to East Sussex to issue penalties to parents for periods of unauthorised absence.

Exceptional or unavoidable circumstances do not include:

- the availability of cheap holidays;
- a holiday paid for, or booked, by someone else
- an overlap with beginning/end of term dates
- a mix-up in term dates
- birthdays, relatives visiting, trips to festivals (this list is not exhaustive).

Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has adopted the following attendance target:

- 96% attendance for all children

Persons responsible for attendance matters:

Head teacher: Mr Noel Fadden

Administrative Assistant/Attendance Officer: Mrs Frances Cane

Business Manager: Mrs Joanna Roadway

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr Noel Fadden

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Review date: May 2025 (or earlier if necessary)

Attendance schedule/action plan

The following table highlights the action to be taken at various stages for children each term. Attendance will be monitored at the end of each term and all children below 90% in that term, will follow the schedule below.

Attendance will be monitored at the end of each term and be compared to the previous term.

Stage	Attendance percentage	Action	Follow up
1	1st term <90% 10 + sessions missed during past term (5 days)	Monitoring attendance letter to be sent home to advise parents that school are concerned about the child's attendance. This will be for all children below 90%, regardless of reason why.	Monitor the following term to check for increased attendance.
2	2 nd term <90% 10 + sessions missed during past term (5 days)	2 nd follow up letter sent, invite parents into school to meet and discuss attendance; identify any issues and provide support to child and parents. A simple action plan will be drawn up with target attendance highlighted.	Targets set by school/parents to increase attendance. Monitor the following term to check for increased attendance.
3	3 rd term <90% 10 + sessions missed during past term (5 days)	Follow up meeting to review the 2 nd letter action plan. Refer to attendance officer for support.	Follow plan from Attendance Officer – this will include meetings with parents, targets being set for each 3 week period and possible fines being imposed. Monitor the following term to check for increased attendance.

Late procedure:

Letters to be sent each (new) term, for all pupils who are late (between 8.55 and 9.15am) more than 6 times in a half term (once a week).

For pupils who are late after 9.15am 3+ times, the Headteacher will invite parents in for a meeting to discuss reasons why and look at ways of supporting the family/child.

We hope that you will work in partnership with us to make sure that your child attends school every day, allowing them access a full-time education and the opportunities that this brings.

I understand that if the request is unauthorised the Attendance Team at ESCC can be notified of the absence taken and a legal intervention may be instigated in the form of a Penalty Notice or Simple Caution. If a Penalty Notice is issued it will be to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. I understand that if I do not pay this will result in legal action.

Name of Parent/Carer:

Signed: Date:

Contact email address:
.....

Contact Phone number:
.....

This form will be submitted to the Headteacher via the School Office for review.

Headteacher decision:

Name of child:.....Class:
.....

Date decision form sent home:.....

Authorised: Your request has been authorised for the following dates:
...../...../..... Time..... to/...../..... Time.....

Unauthorised: Your request has been unauthorised for the following dates:
...../...../..... Time..... to/...../..... Time.....

Unauthorised but no penalty notice will be requested for the following dates:
...../...../..... Time... to/...../..... Time.....

Headteacher signature: Date:

Southover CE Primary: Equality Impact Assessment Summary

Date of assessment: 29.4.24

Manager(s) name: Noel Fadden

Role: Headteacher

Proposal, project, service, strategy or policy, that was impact assessed:

Attendance Policy

Summary of findings:

This policy does not discriminate against any group. Potential barriers concerning the accessibility of the policy are mitigated by employees being able to request the policy in different formats and having the policy printed for them by a manager with access to a computer/intranet.

Summary of recommendations and key points of action plan:

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Groups that this project or service will impact upon

Please mark the appropriate boxes with an 'x'

	Positive	Negative
Age		
Disability		
Ethnicity		
Gender/Transgender		
Marital Status/Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Religion/Belief		
Sexual Orientation		
Other (carers, literacy, health, rurality, poverty)		
All	X	