

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Approved by:	Full Governing Body	
Last reviewed on:	October 2024	
Next review due by:	October 2025	

## **Purpose**

Attendance and punctuality are key life skills. This policy is intended to:

- Safeguard all children, placing paramount importance on their welfare and education.
- Reduce the incidents of regular non-attendance in a small percentage of pupils.
- Ensure that all absences of pupils are notified by parents to the schools (and school to parents) and therefore reduce the occurrence of unauthorised absences.
- Reduce the incidence of casual lateness in a small percentage of pupils.
- Formalise procedures for parents/carers wishing to take leave of absence during term time.

## **School Day Timings and Registration:**

- The school **gates open at 8.30am**
- The school **doors open at 8.35am** for morning learning activities.
- Registration is taken at **8.45am** \* **all children should be in class by this time**
- The school **gates close at 8.45am**
- Children arriving **after 8.45am** should come through the main office and be signed in by their parent/carer as **late**
- The school gates open at the end of the day at **3.10pm**
- The school **day ends at 3.15pm**
- After the official close of the morning register at **9.05am** - a child will be registered as an **unauthorised absence**.

*This equates to **32 hours and 30 minutes** from register time to the end of the day.*

## **Registration marks**

- Pupil attendance is recorded with a black line in Arbor
- Known pupil absences (either note from parent/carers or record of verbal reason) are recorded in the register with the appropriate code (see appendix on Attendance Codes).
- Written absence notes / emails provided by parent/carers will be uploaded onto CPOMS.
- A verbal reason given to a member of staff is acceptable and will be recorded on CPOMS.
- Admin staff will note in Arbor and CPOMS reasons for absence from persistent absentees.
- Any member of staff taking a call from a parent regarding absence should record the name of the caller, name of the child, reason for absence and their probable return date (if known). This will be recorded on CPOMS
- Any child whose reason for absence is unknown should be recorded as N until the reason is known. This will be updated by the Admin Staff.

## **Absence requests**

- If parents wish to take their children out of school during term time (even for a day) they must complete a 'notification of absence' form available from the school office or in Appendix 1.
- Parents/carers should be aware that there is no automatic right of parents/carers to take children away during term time. Revised guidance from the DfE states there are very few exceptional circumstances when Leave of absence during term time will be granted e.g. special requests relating to Service Personnel Leave. Term time holidays are not classed as 'exceptional circumstances'. Repeated absence can have a detrimental impact on a child's education.
- All leave of absence taken without request will be recorded as an unauthorised absence
- Each request is considered by the Head Teacher who recognises that there may be a few exceptional circumstances to approve leave of absence during term time and these will be considered on a case by case basis. Supporting documentation could be requested.
- Once signed by the Headteacher, a copy of the form will be placed on CPOMS, and the bottom portion detached and returned to the parents/carers:
- Authorised leave requests are recorded in Arbor by the Admin staff.
- Requests to attend medical appointments in advance should also be communicated to staff via letter/verbal request and noted in written form to go with the register to be passed to Admin staff.
- Any formal letters from hospital consultants/health care professionals should be given to admin and scanned onto CPOMS for pupil records.
- Teachers are not required to set work for absent pupils, and any requests by parents to do so will be considered on an individual basis e.g. Long Term absence

## **Leave of absence during term time**

As noted leave of absence during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances in line with DfE guidance (See reference to [www.dfe.gov.uk](http://www.dfe.gov.uk)). Holidays during term time are not authorised.

Any absences higher than national would be challenged by external sources including Ofsted. Pupils with less than 94% attendance will be written to each half term. There is a duty on the school to reduce absence levels.

Please note that the school may also request evidence of medical appointments for sickness absence.

A request for absence for 5 or more consecutive days / 10 sessions WILL NOT be authorised. Exceptions to this will be made on an individual basis by the Headteacher. The Notification of Absence Form (Appendix 1) will note if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. If it is unauthorised, a letter will be sent with the return slip (Appendix 2). The school will apply to CWAC for a Fixed Penalty Notice.

### **Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality**

- The Headteacher and Key Stage Leads monitor whole school attendance weekly and this is reported to the school in the celebration assembly
- Parents are informed by letter when attendance falls to 94% or a child is late 4 times in a half term, with targets set to be achieved and if no improvements are made then a meeting is arranged with Key Stage Leads and Pastoral Team. If further targets are not met, then a formal Panel Meeting will be held with the Headteacher.
- Staff have a duty of care to inform the SLT via CPOMS of any unusual or concerning patterns of attendance.
- If staff are concerned about absence, then the Learning Mentor liaises with the SLT and Admin to discuss reasons and support to families to improve attendance
- The school will seek advice / guidance from the Local Authority / EWO for children whose attendance falls below acceptable levels.
- Registers are available on Arbor
- The registers are also inspected annually by an EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) who provides feedback.

## **Appendix 1**



# Sutton Green Primary School

Armthorpe Drive, Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire. CH66 4NW  
Tel: (0151) 832 1290

Headteacher: Mr J Stark

Email: [head@suttongreenpri.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:head@suttongreenpri.cheshire.sch.uk)

Website: [www.suttongreen.org](http://www.suttongreen.org)

## Notification of Absence

*Note: Holidays cannot be authorised*

Child's Name:	Class / Year:		
Date From:	Date To:		
Return to school on:	Number of learning days missed:		
I understand that I could receive a fine <input type="checkbox"/>			
I agree to support my child in catching up on lost learning or attending 'catch-up' provision <input type="checkbox"/>			
I understand that long, avoidable absences will negatively impact my child's attainment and progress <input type="checkbox"/>			
Reason for request:			
Signed (Parent / Carer):			Date:     /     /
For School only:			
Attendance:	Approved:    Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Signed (Headteacher):	Date:		

Thank you for your understanding regarding legislation for holidays taken during term time. You will be aware that holidays cannot be authorised and fines will be issued. The law restricts my ability to authorise these. This legislation is in place to keep children in school and have the best opportunities to succeed.

Please note: one week off school equates to at least 25 hours lost learning time. This severely impacts a child's attainment and progress. Research suggests it can also affect their mental health.

Parents who take children on holiday but offer a reason of illness will still be fined if no evidence can be provided.

*We understand that there are certain circumstances that require compassionate consideration and support. Therefore, specific days can be authorised under exceptional circumstances. Hospital visits and medical appointments will be authorised.*



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## Appendix 2 - Example

*Together helping every child*

Date:

Dear

Thank you for your recent letter requesting authorisation for > (insert name of child) to be absent from school to go on holiday from the > (insert from date) to > (insert to date).

The Government discourages the taking of holidays in term time. Evidence shows that children who miss school do not achieve as well as those who attend regularly.

As of September 2013, the law has restricted a Head Teacher's ability to authorise holidays during term time. Head Teachers are now only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

As this request does not meet the criterion of 'exceptional circumstances', I am unfortunately unable to authorise this absence.

Should you still choose to take a holiday with your child during this period the Local Authority will be informed as this will constitute an unauthorised absence. A Fixed Penalty Notice will then be issued in accordance with section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The law stipulates that the current penalties payable by parents are £60 when the penalty is paid within 21 days and £120 when the penalty is paid within 28 days.

This penalty is per parent/carers per child.

If the fixed penalty is not paid this could lead to you being prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

If you feel this decision has not taken into account any relevant exceptional circumstances, please contact the school immediately for further discussion.

Yours sincerely  
Mr J Stark  
Headteacher

## Attendance Codes for Register (all from Arbor)

Code	Full name	Description
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
J	Interview	At a job interview, or interviewing with another educational establishment.
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
C	Other Authorised Absence	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence.
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion.
H	Family Holiday (Agreed)	A leave of absence for a family holiday is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointment	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.

I	Illness	The student is ill (unless the truthfulness of the claim is in question). This code should not be used for medical or dental appointments.
Cov	Confirmed case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. Use this code if the student has received a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) test result.
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Not Required (Non-Compulsory School Age)	<p>The child is of non-compulsory school age and is not required to be in school during this session. This code should only be used for students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.</p> <p>This code can also be used for any covid-related absences not covered by the codes below (after confirming with the DfE).</p>
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	The school is closed due to an unavoidable cause or the student is unable to travel to the school. It can also be used where the pupil is in custody (for less than four months). This code is collected for statistical purposes but does not contribute to your attendance figures.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.
SII	Self-isolating internal exposure	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Use this code if the student was exposed to Covid-19 in your educational setting and is self-isolating as a result



SIE	Self-isolating external exposure	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Use this code if the student was exposed to Covid-19 outside of your educational setting and is self-isolating as a result. This includes self-isolation after travelling outside the UK, self-isolation due to a suspected case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the household and self-isolating requested by the NHS Test and Trace service.
Sym	Suspected case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Use this code if the student is displaying symptoms but has not yet received a test result.

## Appendix 4:



## Attendance Script

If a parent/carer phones and says their child is unwell please find out what it is that is wrong with them and do not accept – just sick, just ill or unwell. If they have left an answerphone message saying this, please call them for clarification.

► *What is wrong with (child's name),*

Depending on their response, ask some of these questions.....

► *Do you think you should go to the doctor/pharmacy? Let us know how you get on and phone school back.*

► *If they feel better after a rest/sleep then please bring them in for the afternoon session as there are lots of exciting things going on in school.*

► *Hopefully your child will be well and back in tomorrow, if not will you please phone school in the morning and let us know.*

If a parent/carer phones and says their child is going to the doc/dentist etc at 11am please ask them to bring their child in for their morning mark.

If a parent/carer phones to say both children are unwell, always mention that if one of the children is feeling better staff could possibly collect that child.

If a parent/carer phones and they are unable to bring their child to school as they are unwell, inform them that a member of staff may be able to collect their child and bring them to school so they can rest.



## Appendix 5:

### Attendance and Punctuality Updates for Parents/Carers

Government set schools a target of **96%** attendance and we must strive to meet their standards.

Research has proven that there is a high correlation between school attendance and academic performance and success. Absence from school is often the greatest single cause of poor performance and achievement.

*Why is it so important to attend every day?*

- Learning is a progressive activity; each day's lessons build upon those of the previous day(s).
- Reading the material and completing work independently does not compensate for direct interaction with the teacher.
- Many classes use discussions, demonstrations, experiments and participation as part of the daily learning activities, and these cannot be made up by those who are absent.

*Are there other benefits to my child?*

- Pupils with good attendance records generally achieve higher grades and enjoy school more.
- Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life.

- Regular school attendance patterns encourage the development of other responsible patterns of behaviour.

*What are the risks of frequent absences?*

- A child who does not attend school regularly will be unlikely to keep up with the work.
- The more pupils miss school, the lower their grades; the lower their grades, the less they want to stay in school.

*What can parents do to help?*

- Parents must model the value of education, including the importance of regular attendance.
- Make sure that your child goes to school regularly and arrives on time - you will establish a good habit that they will carry through life.
- If your child starts missing school, work with the school to put things right. Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of him/her missing school.
- If your child is ill or must miss school for some other reason, contact school immediately. If you ask for home learning, make sure your child completes it.
- Do not expect school to approve of shopping trips, birthday treats etc. during school hours. Arrange family holidays so that your child will not miss any learning.
- Take an interest in your child's school work and be involved in the school as much as possible-your child will value school more if you do.

## **Leave of Absence in Term Time**

A change to government legislation means that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time.

Requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are "exceptional circumstances" and holidays are not considered exceptional. Requests for leave must be made to the head teacher in advance, as the Department for Education has told schools that they cannot authorise any absences after they have been taken.

A penalty notice is a fine to parents or carers if they fail to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly. If a penalty notice is issued, it will be one fine to cover the whole period of the absence. So the fine would be the same amount for an absence of five days or 10 days. For example, a parent could be issued with £60.00 fine if their child misses one day of school each week over a five week period, whilst another parent might be issued the same fine for one two-week block of absence. Penalty fines are £60.00 per child per parent if paid within 21 days,

and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the fine is not paid, parents will be reported for prosecution.

**REMEMBER** – Regular attendance is necessary for success in school. Help ensure that your child has the best opportunity for success by making sure he/she is in school every day.

What are we doing at Sutton Green to promote and support good attendance and punctuality?

- S4YC breakfast club starting at 7.45am
- School run breakfast club starting at 7.45am
- Relaxed start to the day - gates open at 8.40am and children can arrive from then
- Staff on the gate/door to support reluctant children when they arrive
- Special days, trips, exciting lessons, clubs, rewards, predictable routines etc.

### **Attendance Support:**

- If you have not notified the office about your child's absence by 9am each morning, we will try to call you. If we cannot get a response you will receive a text informing you that we are on our way to complete a welfare visit at your house, for safeguarding reasons
- Any pupils with attendance below 94% each half term will be monitored by the Key Stage Leaders, who will write to parents with set targets for improvement. If targets are not met, parents will attend a support meeting with Key Stage Leads and the Pastoral Team. If targets continue to be unmet, a formal Panel Meeting will be held with the headteacher
- Any pupils who are late (arrive after 9am) 4 times in a half term will be monitored by the Key Stage Leaders, who will write to parents with set targets for improvement. If targets are not met, parents will attend a support meeting with Key Stage Leads and the Pastoral Team. If targets continue to be unmet, a formal Panel Meeting will be held with the headteacher
- The Senior Leadership Team will be writing to all parents/carers each half term regarding attendance. A green letter will be sent if your child has 97+%, amber for 94-96% and red letter for below 94%, to help you monitor their attendance

### **Motivators for Pupils:**

- Every Friday, the class from each Key Stage, with the best weekly attendance will receive a trophy (Attendance Award!)
- Every Friday, the class from each Key Stage, with the least number of minutes late, will receive a trophy (Punctuality Award!)
- Each class will have an attendance puzzle on display in the corridor. Every time they win the Attendance award they will receive a piece of their puzzle. The class who completes their puzzle first will receive a prize

- Every child in EYFS will receive a 100% attendance certificate on a Friday, if they have been in school all week
- Every child with 100% attendance each week will receive a raffle ticket in their class pot. This will be drawn at the end of each half term and a prize will be awarded
- Look out for 'In Time Week!' Each half term, we will have a special week where children can receive a raffle ticket for their class pot, if they arrive before 9am. Some random days will be DOUBLE TICKET days!
- Pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the Autumn Term will receive a bronze certificate, 100% at the end of the Spring Term will be celebrated with a silver certificate and a gold certificate will be awarded to anyone with 100% attendance for the whole school year.