



# Attendance Policy

Policy Date: Aut 2014  
Review Date: Aut 2017

## General Principles

Good attendance is a contributory factor in allowing children to make good, consistent progress in their school work. *There is also a clear link between attendance and safeguarding children.*

We expect good attendance from our pupils in order for them to make the most of the opportunities we offer them, and we rely on our partnership with the children and their parents to achieve this.

We ask parents to help us by notifying us of all absences on the first day, by telephone, using the 24-hour dedicated messaging service, or in writing. If parents have not contacted the school a member of the office staff will telephone them to establish the reason for absence.

Our children are praised for good attendance; attendance is noted on reports and confirmed with parents when they seek permission for holiday absences, etc.

## Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The law requires that all schools show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence.

*Authorised absence can be: -*

- Sickness
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside of school hours
- Days of religious observance
- In exceptional circumstances, holidays that are sanctioned by the school

*Unauthorised absence is: -*

- Truancy
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Any absence which the school has not been informed about, either by letter or telephone
- Absence requests submitted less than 2 weeks in advance of the first day of absence

Absence relating to 'holiday' is now subject to Statutory Instrument 2013 No. 756, which has made changes to the use of the word within the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**. The word holiday has been omitted from Regulation 7 and replaced with

*Leave of absence shall not be granted unless –*

*a) An application has been made in advance to the proprietor by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides;*

*and*

*b) The proprietor, or a person authorised by the proprietor in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*

Therefore, at Suffolk County Council schools Leave of Absence for a holiday may be granted in the following circumstances, *but are still at the discretion of the Head Teacher.*

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holiday outside term time.
- Public Services such as the Police, Fire and Health Service whose holidays are rostered and evidence can be given to the school.
- Cultural issues for families returning to their homeland, with details provided.

- When there are family circumstances that may necessitate a holiday in term time for the benefit of the whole family.
- If a child is in an approved drama/ dance performance or sporting activity for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority.
- If a child is involved in an exceptional occasion – in authorising such an absence, a letter to or meeting with the head teacher to explain the circumstances would be necessary, along with a consideration of current and previous behaviour patterns.

The Guidance also confirms considerations that are not deemed 'exceptional':

- The cost of the holiday being less in term time
- Prolonged holiday
- An absent parent/ grandparent taking the child on holiday in term time
- Any absences during public examinations and SATs tests

All requests for family holidays, and other absences that are known about in advance, should be put to the school in writing *at least 2 weeks beforehand* – an Absence Request Form is available from the school office.

### **The School Day**

Our school day starts at 8.50am, with the registers marked shortly after this. Pupils who are not present for registration will be marked as absent. Those arriving by 9.10am will have their absence mark amended to a 'late' code. Children arriving after 9.10am will remain marked as absent.

All pupils who arrive after 8.50am must report to the school office and complete the 'Late Record' sheet. Office Staff are then responsible for amending the register accordingly including the reason for lateness.

### **Monitoring Absence**

- The Office Manager is responsible for the weekly recording of absence data on SIMS.net. Reports based on this data are reviewed by the Headteacher

and Educational Welfare Officer.

- Office staff and teachers are responsible for reporting any concerns about absence to the Headteacher
- In the first instance the Headteacher will discuss such concerns with parents. Any serious concerns will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer

### **Equal Opportunities**

This policy aims to provide equality of opportunity regardless of gender, ethnicity, colour, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation or marital status.