

'FROM GREAT TO AMAZING'

2015

Attendance Policy



SUCCESS, UNIQUENESS, ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITY

Implemented September 2015

To be reviewed July 2018

Review frequency Tri annually

Consultation process

- Staff July 2015
- Governors June 2015

Signed

(HT)

(COG)

Attendance Policy

General Information

Children need to have the maximum possible attendance and good punctuality if they are to get the best out of their education. Regular habits of work, formed when young, lay good foundations for future education and for the adult world of responsibilities and employment.

Children who do not attend regularly are disadvantaged in their learning. They often have gaps in their knowledge and, therefore, cannot make connections between the various parts of their knowledge and between one subject and another. They may also be unsure of their social relationships with adults and children.

Children who do not want to be at school may not only be disaffected themselves but may also have an effect on the other children, both in terms of their learning and in their attitude to school.

Some children want to be at school but are prevented by home circumstances.

Children who are not at school may not be cared for safely, and may be at risk.

Each day's absence counts as 2 sessions.

Targets

Our attendance targets are set by the Government and their expectation is that children's attendance is above 95%.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers of children of compulsory school age must ensure that their child receives full time education either by regular school attendance or otherwise (e.g. home tuition which is agreed and monitored by the LEA).

Parents/carers of all Suffolks pupils work in partnership with the school in their child's education and they are responsible for ensuring the following:

- the child attends and stays in school
- the child arrives on time
- the child is properly dressed and in a condition to learn (nourished and well rested)
- the child is supported by them in observing the school's golden rules
- the child is taught by their parents to respect education and those who deliver it

Parents/Carers have a duty to inform the school of their child's absence.

School

The school has a responsibility

- to support the attendance of its pupils
- to take assertive action to improve attendance
- to deal with problems that lead to non-attendance
- to investigate periods of absence
- to report any concerns to Educational Welfare Service

The school shares its policy on attendance on the school website and provides opportunities to discuss its implementation with parents (e.g. at parents meetings, new to school induction and annual reception and nursery parents meetings)

The school ensures that all staff follow agreed procedures for the recording and monitoring of levels of attendance.

The Governing Body

Governors discuss issues surrounding general rates of attendance, when these issues are raised by the Headteacher through Governing Body Meetings.

The Borough of Enfield (LEA)

The LEA employs Education Welfare Officers to work with schools to help them to carry out their statutory responsibilities.

Procedures

Registration

- Registers must be taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- The schools MIS system (Scholarpack) is used to record attendance
- A clear distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence must be shown.
- Explanations for absence should be shown alongside the record of attendance.
- Any pupil not present at registration should be marked absent (no reason given)

Lateness

Children must be in the playground from 8:45 a.m. ready for the start of the school day at 8:55 a.m.

Arriving late at school is counted as an unauthorised absence once registration is closed at 9.05am. If a child arrives late, the parent/carer must sign the late arrivals book, and give a reason for the child's late arrival.

The Attendance Officer will amend the register in the event of the late arrival of any child.

Patterns of lateness or irregular attendance will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Children not collected at the end of the school day

School responsibilities

- To ensure that relevant information on parents (e.g. contact numbers) is known and accessible.
- To advise families to contact school as soon as they know a delay is anticipated.
- To ensure that the parents/carers of children who are collected late, are advised

Action to be taken

- Children who are not collected at the end of the day should be taken by the teacher to the front reception area after a period of ten minutes from the end of the session
- Children should be signed in the 'late collection' book by the teacher and signed out by the collecting adult with the reason for the delay indicated.
- At 3:30pm a member of the office team should telephone contact numbers.
- At 4.00pm the child will be taken to tea time club to ensure appropriate supervision (Parents will be charged the full session amount)
- If no contact with parent/carer has been made by 4.15pm the school should contact Children's Services to alert the duty social worker. This will need to be sanctioned by a member of the Leadership Team)
- If a decision has been made to take the child into the care of Children's Services, every effort will be made by the school to inform the parent/carer. A letter will be delivered to the home address and a letter will be left in a prominent place at the school

Children's Services will then contact the school to outline what arrangements have been made and inform them of any decisions in regard to future care.

What action is taken depends on the presenting circumstances and what is in the best interests of the child. In the most extreme cases, it could be a child protection referral on the grounds that the child has been abandoned.

Please see Appendix 1 for Suffolks School Dropping Off and Collecting Expectation.

Suffolks Primary School has adopted the 'Policy and Procedure for Primary Aged Children not collected from school at the end of the school day.' Please see www.suffolks@enfield.sch.uk school policies

Emergency Procedures

During the day, paper copies of registers, Late Arrivals Book and the Visitors Signing Book can be found in the admin area. In the event of a fire, bomb alert, or fire drill, a member of the admin team will take the documents to the designated fire assembly point and distribute the registers to the class teachers, who call the registers and report the results to the Headteacher. For staff, if an alarm is triggered an automatic register is printed.

Absence Procedures

On the first day of absence, the parent/carer should notify the school by telephone or email giving a reason for the absence. The reason for absence will be considered and a decision will then be made whether to authorise it or not. If a child is absent and the school has not been informed, the school will call the parent to explain the reason.

If there is no reply, a record of unauthorised absence may be recorded.

Holidays

Any holiday leave in term time will not be authorised. Please ensure that the school are informed of any holidays you intend to take. Children who are absent for longer periods without any explanation may be deemed as 'missing in education' and may warrant a referral to EWO.

Exceptional Circumstances

Only under exceptional circumstances, i.e. death in the family, where emergency leave is needed, the Headteacher may grant this as an authorised absence.

Attendance Officer

The school has its own attendance officer who monitors attendance and punctuality. If children are absent from school or regularly late, the Attendance Officer will make contact with the parents and work with them to overcome difficulties and improve the situation. If these difficulties persist a referral will be made to Education Welfare Service.

Education Welfare Service

After ten consecutive days of unauthorised absence, the school is obliged to inform the Education Welfare Service.

Where there are particular concerns the Educational Welfare Officer may visit the child's home.

In certain cases, a multi-professional meeting involving the school, the EWO and other agencies may be called in order to support a particular family.

Where there is sufficient cause for concern, the LEA, in consultation with the Headteacher, and the Educational Welfare Officer, may be involved in applying to the court for an Education Supervision Order, or even in the prosecution of the parents/carers.

Positive Intervention

Where there are difficulties with a child's attendance or punctuality the school has a responsibility to work with the child and the parent/carer to identify the cause. The school's reward system may be used to encourage children to improve their attendance and sustain it over increasing periods of time.

Authorised Absence

The law authorises certain categories of absence. 'Section 199 of the Education Act 1993' provides statutory defences in legal proceedings when:

- The pupil was absent with leave
- The pupil was prevented from attending by illness or any unavoidable cause
- The absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance by the parent's religious body

- The school at which the child is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home and the LEA has made no suitable arrangements for transport or transfer to a school nearer to the child's home

It is worth noting that parental ignorance of the fact a child is truanting is not a defence. Nor is the fact that a parent may have made every effort to ensure attendance. If the child is not attending and the absence is unauthorised, an offence is committed.

Categorisation of absence

A child's absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil was absent with leave (e.g. permission from the Headteacher)
- The pupil was ill
- The pupil was attending a medical appointment (e.g. dentist) most appointments do not need a whole day off school.
- The pupil was absent due to unavoidable cause (e.g. illness in a single parent/carer family)
- If the absence occurred on a day set aside for religious observance
- If the child does not live within walking distance of the school and there is a difficulty with transport
- If there is a death in the family

In all cases of authorised absence attention should be given to the length of the absence and where possible a fixed return date should be negotiated. The level and frequency of authorised absence may also be a matter of concern.

The school will not authorise absence for:

- Shopping during school hours
- Extensive family holidays
- Looking after brothers and sisters
- Celebrating a birthday
- Oversleeping
- The child 'not wanting to come to school'
- Translating for parents

Attendance Code List:

Code Name

/\	Present at registration
B	Educated off-site (not dual registration)
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)
D	Dual registered (i.e. present at another school or at a PRU)
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made
F	Agreed extended family holiday
G	Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of agreement)
H	Agreed family holiday
I	Illness
J	Interview

L	Late but arrived before the register closed
M	Medical or dental appointment
N	No reason for the absence provided yet
O	Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late and arrived after the register closed
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience (not work based training)
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils
Y	Partial and forced closure
Z	Pupil not on roll yet
#	School closed to all pupils

Penalty Notices

As from September 2015, the governing body of Suffolks Primary has agreed to the use of Penalty Notices to support improvement in school attendance.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gives schools the power to issue Penalty Notices in cases of non-school attendance. This is an alternative to prosecution.

As from 1st September, 2013, amendments to the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. Failure to pay a penalty fine, will lead to prosecution. However, prior to a Penalty Notice being issued, a formal warning letter will be sent to parents/carers advising that there will be a 15 day monitoring period for attendance to improve and for them to contact the Headteacher to discuss school's concerns.

A warning that a Penalty Notice may be issued will be sent to both parents or carers (where applicable) for any of the following reasons:

- their child has an unauthorised absence;
- their child is taken on holiday during term-time;
- parentally condoned absences;
- truancy;
- persistent lateness after registers have closed.

Only the Headteacher can authorise any absence. Evidence of the reason for absence may be requested.

If a child continues to be absent without authorisation for 20 sessions or more (10 school days) during a three month period, school will apply to the Education Welfare Service for a Penalty Notice to be issued. Where there are two parents or carers with parental responsibility, it is likely both will receive a Fixed Penalty Fine.

Refer to [Appendix 2](#) for procedures for attendance concerns

Suffolks School Dropping Off and Collecting Expectations

*All children should be brought to school and collected by a responsible adult

If at any time there are serious concerns for the welfare of the child, the school has the duty to refuse to release the child and will contact Children's Social Services immediately.

Dropping Off

When children are dropped off at school the adult must ensure that they stay with them until a school adult becomes responsible.

This means taking them to the classroom doors, signing them in at breakfast club or bringing them into the school office if the child arrives later than the start time.

The school regularly carries out checks of children arriving in the morning. If the school becomes concerned that a child is not supervised by an adult the following steps will be actioned.

1. The child's parents will be notified by a phone call
2. If it is repeated, a letter will be sent which will state the concern and future actions
3. If it is repeated, a meeting will be held with a member of the pastoral care team.
4. If it is repeated, an Early Help Form will be completed and sent to Children's Social Services
5. If it is repeated, the school will continue to inform Children's Social Services .

Collecting children

Children should be collected from their classroom doors. (Foundation Stage, KS1 3.10pm, KS2 3.15pm)

The school must be notified of any changes of adults collecting children has been arranged.

Failure to inform the school will result in the child not being allowed to leave the school.

Children who are not collected on time will be brought to the school office where they will be signed out once the adult arrives

Children who are not collected by 4.00 will be taken to the Tea Time club to be supervised. (Parents will be expected to pay for the full session)

If children are not collected and there has been no contact with parents/carers the school will need to take further action. The school will contact Social Services at 4.15 to alert them that the child may be in need of Local Authority Care.

If parents are persistently late collecting their child, a letter will be sent to them explaining the concern. A copy of this letter must be sent to Children's Social Services and Safer Schools Police Officers.

Children who attend after school clubs and events

If a child is collected late on two occasions they will no longer be able to take part in the club

For special events, if a child is persistently collected late this may result in the child being unable to take part.

* Children in Year 6, whose parents have written a request, are able to come to school and leave by themselves. If at any time the school becomes concerned about their safety or behaviour this allowance will be withdrawn.

Suffolks School as adopted the 'Policy and Procedures for Primary Aged Children not collected from school at the end of the school day' produced by Enfield Safeguarding Children Board, March 2015

Appendix 2

Procedure for attendance concerns.

Stage 1

Attendance Officer to monitor each child and if their attendance drops below 95% she will send a letter of concern and reassess after 2 weeks.



Stage 2

If there is no improvement after 4 weeks Attendance Officer will arrange to meet with the parents and request that medical evidence is provided in future if their child is absent due to illness. If medical evidence is not provided the absence will be recorded as unauthorized. If the attendance falls below 85% an immediate referral to the EWS will be made.



Stage 3

Attendance Officer will meet with the parents and issue a Penalty Notice Warning. If there is still no improvement after another 2 weeks. Headteacher to be informed that a Penalty Notice is to be issued.



Stage 4

Headteacher to meet with parents and Penalty Charge notice will be issued.



Final stage

A referral will be made to the EWS if the Penalty Charge has no effect and the attendance continues to drop. This may result in court proceedings, a fine of up to £2,500 and a criminal record.