‘FROM GREAT TO AMAZING’



SUFFOLKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

SEPT 2025

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1. Overview

Excellent attendance is everybody's responsibility

Our attendance target is **96%**

Suffolks Primary School's attendance policy reflects laws and guidance produced by the Department for Education and the London Borough of Enfield.

Children with the maximum possible attendance and punctuality get the best from education and lay positive foundations for the adult world of responsibilities and employment.

Children who do not attend school regularly are disadvantaged. They often have gaps in their knowledge and may be unsure of their social relationships with adults and other children.

Absence from school without a good reason is a criminal offence that can result in legal action by the Local Authority under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996). Any problems with regular attendance are therefore best solved between the school, parents/carers and the child at the earliest stage possible.

Each day's absence counts as 2 sessions. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Working in partnership with families is central to our journey as a school.

We provide contact details to Enfield Education Welfare Service so parents/carers have the information they need to sustain good attendance. They are independent of the school and give impartial advice. Their contact details are available from the School's Attendance Team or by contacting the Local Authority directly.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Parents/Carers

Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age (this is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first) must ensure that their child receives full time education through either regular school attendance or otherwise (e.g. home tuition which is agreed and monitored by the LEA). (Education Act 1996).

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered. Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law.

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part

time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's attendance in the following ways:

- the child attends school regularly (96% or higher)
- the child is in class for the register at 8.55am
- the child is collected promptly at 3:30pm
- the child is brought in to school and collected by an adult known to the school, unless other arrangements have been made between home and school. In this instance, parents need to consult with a member of Senior Leadership; the minimum age for a sibling to collect is 14 years of age.
- if a child is absent, parents inform the school before 8.45 or soon after together with notification if this is a half or full day absence
- parents/carers tell us at the soonest possible point if their contact details change
- parents/carers provide a minimum of 3 up-to-date emergency contact numbers

The School

To assist this, the school will:

- support the attendance and punctuality of all its pupils
- take assertive action to improve attendance and punctuality when needed
- deal sensitively and robustly with issues that lead to non-attendance and lateness
- investigate periods of absence
- support local and national agencies, including Enfield's Educational Welfare Service, to provide a strategic and consistent approach to attendance
- ensure that all staff follow agreed expectations to record attendance accurately

The school shares its Attendance Policy on its website and welcomes opportunities to discuss its implementation (e.g. at parents meetings, school induction meetings, curriculum meetings and through newsletters).

The Governing Body

Governors investigate issues surrounding attendance when these issues are raised by the Head teacher as a concern.

The Borough of Enfield (LEA)

The Local Education Authority (LA) provides an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to work with us to help us carry out our statutory responsibilities.

3. Procedures

Registration

Class Teacher

- Takes the registers on the school's MIS system (Arbor) at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Any pupil not present is marked absent (no reason given).

School Attendance Officer

- Investigates every absence (see Appendix 1).
- Records absences and explanations for them alongside the record of attendance in the register.

Lateness

Children can go straight to their classrooms at **8:45am**, ready for the start of the school day.

Arriving at the school office once registration is closed **(9.20am)** is counted as an unauthorised absence. Lateness can cause children to not want to go into the classroom, embarrassment, and impacts their learning.

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.

Persistent patterns of lateness or irregular attendance are monitored and referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Parents/carers are invited to speak with a member of the attendance team if regular attendance is a problem or if they need clarification or support.

Children not collected at the end of the school day

School responsibilities

- To advise families to contact school as soon as they know a delay is likely.
- To take children who are not collected by 3.45pm to Tea-Time Club where they will be supervised until collection. Parents/carers will be charged the session amount.
- A member of the office team will telephone contact numbers.
- If no contact with parents/carers has been made by 4.30pm, the school will alert the Children's Services and a social worker will be appointed to ensure the safety of children out of school hours (this action will be sanctioned by a member of the Senior Leadership Team). In the most extreme cases, this could lead to a child protection referral on the grounds that the child has been abandoned.
- If a decision is 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 in the school office (Please see Appendix 2 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 Suffolks Primary School Policies to find out more.

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 Head teacher so appropriate action can follow. For staff, if an alarm is triggered an automatic register is printed.

Absence Procedures

For each day of absence, the parent/carer should notify the school by telephone or email (attendance@suffolks.enfield.sch.uk) giving a reason for the absence before **8:45 am** or soon after together with notification if this is a half or full day absence. Parents/carers will then be advised whether the absence will be authorised or not. If a child is absent and the school has not been informed, a record of unauthorised absence will be recorded.

Holidays

At Suffolks Primary School, we do not allow holidays to be taken during term time and it is the policy of the school that any holidays taken during this time are **unauthorised** and penalty warning notices are issued. In some circumstances penalty notices will be issued: £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days; per parent, per child.

It is only in special circumstances that the Headteacher will authorise any absences. Parents must provide a letter **requesting** absence. Parents are often reminded of school attendance figures, through the school monthly newsletter and that taking holidays during Term time is not conducive to their child's effective education. Children who are absent for 10 days or longer periods without any explanation will be deemed as 'absent in education' which will warrant a referral to EWO.

Children Absent In Education

Where a child is not attending school, has moved without a forwarding address or school, or cannot be traced, or contact cannot be made with the parent, the school is required to inform the local authority that the child is missing. The school will carry out a home visit and refer the family to social care and the police to ensure any concerns for the child's welfare have been thoroughly investigated. Pupils will not be removed from the school roll until notified by the local authority that their enquiries are complete.

A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point the child will be considered to be 'absent in education'.

As part of our safeguarding measures and keeping children safe in education, if a child is absent without notifying the school, on the third day of absence a 'knock on the door' will be carried out by our Attendance Officer and Assistant Head.

Exceptional Circumstances

Exceptional circumstances, i.e. death in the family, where emergency leave is needed, may warrant an authorised absence by the Head teacher if a request is made.

Attendance Officer

The school works closely with the Local Authority who monitors attendance and punctuality. If children are absent from school or regularly late, the Attendance Officer will make contact with the parents/carers with the aim of working with them to improve the situation. If attendance difficulties persist, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service and legal sanctions may follow.

Education Welfare Service

After ten consecutive days of unauthorised absence, the school is required to inform the Education Welfare Service and will request the welfare support team to make a home visit.

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 LA, in consultation with the Head teacher, and the Educational Welfare Officer, may apply to the court for an Education Supervision Order, which could lead to the prosecution or fining of each parent/carer.

Education Welfare Officer Meetings

The Attendance Team meet the EWO weekly to discuss any concerns and follow up the progress of individuals whose attendance or punctuality are causing a concern.

Prior to the meeting, the following information is collected:

- Attendance record for any child with less than 90% attendance
- Attendance record for any child whose absence shows particular trends
- Attendance record for any child who has been frequently late
- Attendance records for **persistent absentees** (those with 90% or less attendance)
- Class/school percentage totals

Information is shared about previous cases and decisions taken about the next stages of intervention where appropriate. Decisions are recorded on the attendance monitoring sheet and the EWO may arrange meetings with parents if it is felt that the child's attendance is an issue.

4. Improving Attendance

Rewards

The school's reward system is used to improve attendance and sustain it over increasing periods of time.

- Children with a termly attendance of 96% or more are entered into a draw to win a prize e.g. 1 hour trampolining session/ £5 Book token.
- Every child with 100% attendance for a full term will receive a stationary prize and a sticker.
- The class with the highest attendance over 96% is awarded popcorn each Friday.
- Any class who reaches their class target (which is generated to improve on their class average the previous term) gains a star to place on their AMAZING! Poster. When all 7 letters are covered with a star, an agreed class reward is given.
- Class Dojo is used to pass on good news to families regarding attendance.
- Weekly attendance results are revealed to pupils in our Values assembly.

Reporting and raising the profile of good attendance

Our termly reports include individual attendance and punctuality percentage figures along with class averages.

During our parent consultation meetings, teachers discuss the attendance figures with parents, together with how their attendance and punctuality has impacted their child's attainment and progress.

Teachers refer to the class average to compare with an individual's attendance figure as well as the school benchmark of 96% or above.

In addition to this, the significance of the social impact of missing school is shared with parents. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.

5. Attendance Codes

Code Name
Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity
Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code D: Dual registered at another school
Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded
Code G: Holiday not granted by the school
Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed
Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code N: Reason for absence not yet established
Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code R: Religious observance
Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed
Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code W: Attending work experience
Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register
#: School closed to all pupils

6. Penalty Notices

School Attendance and the Law

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

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

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

If a child continues to be absent without authorisation for 20 sessions or more (10 school days) during a three month period, the 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 3 for procedures for attendance concerns).

Appendix 1

Suffolks Primary School

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a "session".

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a justified reason. 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 (e.g. permission from the Head teacher)
- The pupil was prevented from attending by illness or any unavoidable cause
- The pupil was attending a medical appointment (although most appointments do not need a whole day and where possible should be booked for out of school hours)
- The absence occurred on a day set aside for specific religious observance
- 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
- There is a death in the family

In all cases of authorised absence, the School Attendance Officer will monitor the length of the absence and negotiate a fixed return date with parents/carers. The level and frequency of authorised absence may also be monitored.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. Unauthorised absences are coded with an O code. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

The school will not authorise absence for:

- Oversleeping
- The child 'not wanting to come to school'
- A sibling is sick
- Shopping trips
- Birthdays (their own or family)
- Family events/ Day trips
- Problems with the distance travelled to school
- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- Looking after other children/ family members or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- Holidays taken during term time without leave - unauthorised absence will lead to a penalty notice being triggered by the Local Authority
- Absences which have never been adequately explained to the school
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

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.

Appendix 2

Suffolks Primary 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 dropping off point where members of SLT are waiting. If your child is anxious to walk without you, we will consider allowing you to walk them further. If you need to speak to a member of the office team, please let SLT members know.

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/carers 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 (3.30pm)

The school must be notified if a different adult is collecting a child.

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 tea-time club. Parents/carers will accrue the costs for the session.

If children are not collected and there has been no contact with parents/carers the school will take further action. The school will contact Social Services at **4:30pm** to alert them that the child may be in need of Local Authority Care.

If parents/carers are persistently late collecting their child, a letter will be sent to them explaining the concern and the procedure that will follow. 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 from clubs 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/carers 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 has 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 3

Suffolks Primary School

Procedure for attendance concerns

Stage 1: Working together

Attendance Officer to monitor each child and if their attendance drops below 91% a first attendance letter will be sent from the school and phone contact with parents will be made to remind them of their legal obligations in relation to attendance. This is an opportunity to talk through any concerns regarding regular school attendance.

We will reassess school attendance after 3 weeks.



Stage 2: Further school action

If there is no improvement after 3 weeks, a second attendance letter will be sent by the school and a face-to-face appointment will be made with parents to discuss this issue. Attendance Officer will contact the parents/carers (possibly including a home visit) to ensure that medical evidence is provided for future absence and check that the child is safe and well.



Stage 3: EWO action

This will indicate we have been unable to work with parents/carers successfully to improve attendance. We will contact the EWS and a referral may be made.

EWS will continue to monitor attendance with the school, and in line with legal requirements.



Stage 4: Sanctions to parents

If attendance continues to be a problem, parents/carers may be liable to court action and the possibility of up to a £2,500 fine and a criminal record.

Appendix 4

DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. Sept 2022

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness). Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers. Have robust daily processes to follow up absence. Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services. Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance. Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice. Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care. Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders. Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continued support as for persistenly absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and: All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families. Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area. Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children. Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.