



# ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Approved by:** Full Governing Board

**Last reviewed on:** September 2022

**Next review due by:** September 2023

# **SOUTHROP C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**September 2022**

### **1.0 Statement of Intent**

- 1.1 Southrop C of E Primary School aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually.

### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 Parents and Carers have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis. Parents and carers who have chosen to send their children to Southrop C of E Primary School are asked to sign a Home School Agreement (Appendix 1), indicating that they will do their best to ensure their children attend school regularly.
- 2.2 Children are expected to attend school each day unless they are unwell, or in exceptional circumstances, authorised by the Co Headteacher. Attendance is measure by the number of sessions your child is present for. There are two sessions in each school day. Registration is taken at the start of each session to determine a child's presence for that half of the day.
- 2.3 The expected minimum level of attendance over the school year is 98% unless there is a long term illness. This allows for the occasional day or two of absence through illness, without a child falling behind with their work. Parents are given feedback on the level of their child's attendance on their Annual report and on their termly reports, or earlier should there be a concern.
- 2.4 Staff do their best to encourage children to attend school regularly, following up unexplained absences and requesting reasons from parents for these.
- 2.5 Gloucestershire County Council encourages parents to ensure their children achieve high levels of school attendance and punctuality. Please see the guidance on the Gloucestershire County Council website entitled *School Attendance, Information for Parents and Carers*.
- 2.6 This policy has been written with regard to the Department for Education publications School Attendance Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, Independent Schools and Local Authorities, August 2020 and the addendum thereto and Improving School Attendance: Support for Schools and Local Authorities, advice from Gloucestershire County Council including the guidance Securing Regular and Punctual Attendance and reading the Attendance Policies of other schools.

### **3.0 School Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.

- 3.2 Registers will be taken twice daily (at 08.40am and at 12.45pm). Registers will close at 8.45 and at 12.50. Unless a satisfactory reason is given for the arrival after close of registration, the register will record the absence as unauthorised. This is in line with the requirements of the Department for Education and the Local Authority.
- 3.3 Teachers will complete registers on iPads in accordance with the above guidelines. Children arrive after registration will sign in at the office. This information will be transferred to SIMs daily. The Co - Head Teacher will regularly inspect registers in order to ensure that these are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage.
- 3.4 Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality the teacher should speak to the Co- Head Teachers.
- 3.5 Should a child be absent the class teacher will indicate their absence on the online system. When recorded onto SIMS the appropriate code will be recorded indicating the reason. .
- 3.6 The school evaluates attendance at least termly and compares attendance at Southrop C of E Primary School to national figures. These figures are reported termly to Governors. Evaluation of attendance and the effectiveness of strategies to increase attendance for part of an OFSTED inspection. High levels of absence will limit the ability of pupils to make the progress they are capable of, and this will lead to the school's effectiveness being downgraded. High attendance will lead to an increase in progress and will assist in the school reaching a better grading by OFSTED.
- 3.7 The school will employ a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
- the Co - Head Teachers and class teachers will communicate regularly with parents on attendance matters;
  - appropriate personal encouragement or congratulation will be offered to individual children;
  - clear attendance information will be given to parents through reports three times a year

#### **4.0 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

- 4.1 Absence is recorded as either authorised or unauthorised. The school is required to meet targets set by the Local Authority for all absence. The Local Authority Education Welfare Officer regularly checks the levels of absence and will take action using statutory powers where they believe that the level of attendance is not acceptable.
- 4.2 The term "authorised absence" means absence by a child which has been accepted by the Co Headteachers as falling within the categories of sickness,

medical (including dental) appointment (which should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible), temporary exclusion, religious observance, study leave, traveller absence or other exceptional circumstances. Since September 2013 Head Teachers are no longer allowed to authorise absence for family holidays.

- 4.3 The term “unauthorised absence” is any absence which has not been approved by the Co Headteachers in line with the requirements set out in this policy.
- 4.4 Without a reason being given, the Headteacher cannot authorise absence, so the absence remains unauthorised. Parents should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reasons, such as sickness, they should contact school each day by 9.00 am through the school portal. In order to ensure the safety of children the school will telephone parents of absent children if no contact has been made.
- 4.5 Parents may not authorise their child's absence - only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. (Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school will record such absence as unauthorised.)
- 4.6 Parents should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (08.40 am). If a child arrives after registration, his/her parent should report directly to the school office so that the child's presence can be recorded in case of fire. Unauthorised absence also includes sessions where a child has arrived after registration without an acceptable reason (8.45am).
- 4.7 Parents should avoid booking family holidays during term-time. Absence for the purpose of a family holiday will not be authorised by the school.
- 4.8 The school follows the Gloucestershire County Council policies which states that:
- If your child is absent from school for 10 sessions (each school day contains two sessions) in a ten-week period, without authorisation from their school, we will issue a warning letter. (Unauthorised absence also includes sessions where your child has arrived after the school's registration period without an acceptable reason.)
  - If there are no unauthorised absences in the next 15 school days, no further action will be taken. If there are further unauthorised absences there will be no further warning and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Therefore it is vital for parents and carers to have contact with the school on the first day of absence.

## **5.0 Absence Due to Illness**

- 5.1 Children should not come to school if they are obviously unwell. You must report this illness through the school portal by 9am of the first day of absence.
- 5.2 The school has regularly updated detailed information from the Health Authority regarding absence periods related to illnesses. This gives information about the

length of time children should remain home once symptoms are clearing. Should your child be ill with a 'named' illness and you would like to know when they may return to school, please do ring the school and we shall be able to tell you. This will be very helpful, as often children are able to return to school sooner than you may think, provided they are well in themselves, as the infectious periods of illnesses vary greatly.

- 5.3 If children have vomiting and/or diarrhoea, they must stay home from school for 48 hours after the last episode. This is to ensure children are free from infection, and are well enough to attend school.
- 5.4 Most routine appointments can be made outside of school hours. Sometimes you need to see a doctor more urgently, so be guided by what they say as to whether your child comes to school afterwards. If your child is absent due to attending a medical or dental appointment, please let us know in writing or by email.

## 6.0 Request for Holiday Absence

6.1 Extract from Depart of Education website published April 2013:

*Amendments to the 2006 regulations Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 remove references to family holiday and extended leave, as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.*

6.2 Parents and Carers have to get permission from the Headteacher if you want to take your child out of school in term time. The Headteacher is permitted to authorise absence, only under exceptional circumstances. There is no automatic right to go on holiday each year during term time and no entitlement for leave of absence for your child for a family holiday. If you believe you do genuine reason which is an exceptional circumstance then please complete the request form, found on the website and send it to the Co Head teachers. The Co Head teachers will respond within 7 days to confirming if the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

6.3 Please note the following:

- The cost of holiday, or a family's financial situation, is not a consideration when authorising holiday leave of absence. This includes holidays paid for by other family members, such as grandparents. Parents are expected to ensure other family members are aware of the regulations governing school absence in term time.
- Working parents must ensure they book their leave well in advance to ensure they can take a break outside term time. Parents are expected to ensure that other family members are aware of the term dates if they are likely

to be booking a family holiday. Exceptions might be extended periods of detachment for military personnel.

- Parents who are self-employed must also ensure they organise family holidays outside term time.

6.4 Please note that no holiday absences will be authorised under any circumstances during times when internal assessments and tests or external SAT tests or revision are being undertaken. These dates are on the school website, along with term dates for both the coming academic year and the year following. If you are unsure of these dates, please ring and check before booking a holiday.

6.5 A holiday absence request form must be completed a fortnight before the holiday. Please see Appendix 2

6.5 Families can be fined for taking a child on holiday during term time without the Co Head teacher's permission. See the guidance on the Gloucestershire County Council website entitled Penalty Notices, Information for Parents and Carers. If families go away on holiday without asking for authorisation, this also counts as unauthorised absence, and will be treated accordingly. You will be asked to explain the absence on your return and may have to pay a fine.

## **7.0 Children's Attendance Records**

7.1 Attendance records, along with information about any Penalty Warning Notices, or Penalty Notices form part of your child's formal records. These are passed onto secondary school, or to another primary school, should your child change school before the end of their primary education.

7.2 All schools are expected to follow the same regulations with regard to their policy for attendance.

## **8.0 Equalities**

8.1 This policy has been written to take into account the needs of all regardless of age, disability, race, religion, belief and gender.

## **9.0 Values**

9.1 Our twelve school values underpin the life of the whole school community. Those particularly pertinent to attendance are:

Friendship: all members of the school community are encouraged to offer friendship to one another by attending school regularly;

Respect: we expect members of the school community to be respectful to one another, their property, the wider community and the environment;

Perseverance: everyone is expected to persevere through their tasks

## **10.0 Monitoring and Review**

10.1 This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every year.

## Appendix 1 Home-School Agreement

Agreement for the children	Agreement for the parents	Agreement for the school
<p><i>I will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>be ready, respectful and safe</i></li> <li>✓ <i>do my homework regularly and bring it back to school on time</i></li> <li>✓ <i>wear the school uniform and follow the dress code</i></li> <li>✓ <i>understand that if my hair is long it should be up and away from my face</i></li> <li>✓ <i>make sure that my nail varnish is removed and I do not wear jewellery other than plain stud earrings and a watch</i></li> <li>✓ <i>bring all the equipment I need every day</i></li> <li>✓ <i>wear the correct PE kit to school on the right day</i></li> <li>✓ <i>represent the school well when on visits or trips</i></li> <li>✓ <i>take an active part in daily physical activities in order to keep healthy</i></li> <li>✓ <i>respect people of all faiths and the Christian values of our school.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>I/We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>ensure that my child attends regularly, punctually and properly equipped, informing school of absence through the Portal by 9am</i></li> <li>✓ <i>ensure the correct school uniform or PE kit, as appropriate, is worn and that it is named</i></li> <li>✓ <i>support the school's policies and behaviour expectations- Ready, Respectful and Safe</i></li> <li>✓ <i>support my child in homework and other opportunities for home learning</i></li> <li>✓ <i>attend parents' evening to discuss progress</i></li> <li>✓ <i>make the school aware of any concerns or problems that might affect my child's work or behaviour</i></li> <li>✓ <i>get to know about my child's life at the school, attending any information meetings</i></li> <li>✓ <i>read the newsletter and other school notifications</i></li> <li>✓ <i>follow our healthy schools' policy for break and lunchtimes including water in a clear bottle.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>check my child's bag daily and complete all forms, either paper or through the Portal, on time to allow my child to participate fully in activities that enrich their curriculum</i></li> <li>✓ <i>promote a strong and positive relationship with the school, discussing any issues directly, avoiding the use of social media.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>ensure that your child is able to achieve his/her full potential through a balanced curriculum that aims to meet the needs of the individual</i></li> <li>✓ <i>care for your child's safety and happiness</i></li> <li>✓ <i>keep you informed about your child's progress and about general school matters</i></li> <li>✓ <i>let you know about any concerns or problems that affect your child's work or behaviour</i></li> <li>✓ <i>set regular homework from Y1 onwards</i></li> <li>✓ <i>provide an open and welcoming environment in which you are able to become involved in the life of the school</i></li> <li>✓ <i>monitor the progress of your children closely and work together to ensure that they are able to reach their full potential in all areas of the curriculum</i></li> <li>✓ <i>contact parents or carers if there is a repeated problem concerning your child's attendance and punctuality</i></li> <li>✓ <i>contact parents or carers if there is a repeated problem concerning your child's homework.</i></li> </ul>



## Appendix 2

Dear Parent or Carer

### Request for holiday leave of absence during term time

Please find the request for holiday leave absence below. Please be aware that the law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Headteacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in “exceptional circumstances”.

You may consider that a holiday will be educational but your child will still miss out on the teaching and learning that their peers will receive whilst your child is away. Children returning from a leave of absence during term time are also unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed and arrangements need to be made for individual children to catch up on missed work. Disruption to the continuity of teaching and learning is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

If requesting a leave of absence you will need to complete the form below, setting out the reasons. We also ask that you read our attendance policy ([http://www.southrop.gloucs.sch.uk/school\\_info/policies/policies.html](http://www.southrop.gloucs.sch.uk/school_info/policies/policies.html)). If the holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance it will not be agreed. If you nevertheless take your child out of school for the leave of absence this will be recorded as unauthorised leave. The school follows the Gloucestershire County Council policies which states that:

***If your child is absent from school for 10 sessions\* in a ten-week period, without authorisation from their school, we will issue a warning letter. (Unauthorised absence also includes sessions where your child has arrived after the school's registration period without an acceptable reason.) If there are no unauthorised absences in the next 15 school days, no further action will be taken. If there are further unauthorised absences there will be no further warning and a Penalty Notice will be issued.***

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2103163/gcc-attendance-guidance-for-schools-november-2020-final-formatted-by-ginny-201120-2.pdf>

\*One days absence = 2 sessions

All leave of absence requests should be completed on the attached form by the parent with whom the child ordinarily resides. This should be returned to the school **at least fourteen days** before the start of the holiday

We hope you will support our efforts to maintain good levels of attendance and attainment.

Yours Sincerely

Miss M Davies and Mrs J McLellan  
Co-Head Teachers

**Request for holiday leave of absence during term time**

<b><u>Name of child 1</u></b>		<b><u>Year group</u></b>	
<b><u>Name of child 2</u></b>		<b><u>Year group</u></b>	
<b><u>Name of child 3</u></b>		<b><u>Year group</u></b>	
<b><u>Date of first day of absence</u></b>			
<b><u>Date of return to school</u></b>			
<b><u>Number of days absent</u></b>			

If a pupil fails to return within ten school days following the anticipated date of return and no reason is provided, there may be grounds (under some circumstances) to delete your child’s name from the Admissions Register and register them as a Child Missing Education.

**Please detail the exceptional circumstances (reasons) for which you are requesting leave of absence**

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I understand that if the absence request is not authorised and the holiday is taken the Co Head Teachers may request that the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay this it may result in legal action. Name(s) of Parent/Carer (s) making application:

Forename.....Surname.....

Signed ..... Date .....

(please ensure that you are giving at least fourteen days’ notice of the proposed absence, retrospective applications cannot be authorised)

**For school use:**

Attendance%:

Total sessions pupil absent this academic year:

Total unauthorised absence this year:

**Request authorised / Request not authorised**