



Attendance Policy

September 2017

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection
- Inclusion
- Learning and Teaching
- Curriculum
- Administering Medicines
- Equalities Policies

Sicklinghall CP School promotes the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils in its care. All policies work alongside our Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Equalities Scheme, which sets out our strategy for ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Aims

At Sicklinghall, our school motto is '**To Achieve the Best We Can**'. We firmly believe that pupil attendance must be regular and punctual to be able to realise this expectation. The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that our school attendance target is achieved, thus enabling all pupils to receive a full, broad and balanced curriculum.
- To ensure that all stakeholders receive regular information and communication in relation to attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that pupils, parents, staff and governors are aware of the importance to aim for 100% attendance and to be at school, ready to learn, on time.
- To provide clear information to all stakeholders to enable them to meet the school's expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- To enable all pupils to 'achieve the best they can'.

Rationale

Regular attendance and arriving on time are both vital in enabling children in all year groups to be successful in their learning and friendships at school. We recognise that even one day's absence has an impact on a child that is far greater than just that day. Missed learning, the need to catch up and the feelings associated with being absent from school can have long lasting negative effects on children's attainment, self esteem, friendships and engagement with their learning.

Similarly, regular lateness can impact negatively on children's progress and self esteem. Missing even the first ten minutes of a school day can lead to a child 'feeling isolated, behind in their learning or confused as to what is expected of them. Lateness also impacts on the rest of a class who have arrived on time taking valuable teacher time away from learning to repeat instructions to a child arriving late.

Attendance and Punctuality Procedures

Sicklinghall CP School's Attendance Target for 2017/2018 is 97% We aim for this to rise to 98% by 2020.

- Pupils arrive at school from 8:50am and the register is taken at 9am prompt. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken and before 9:30am are marked as arriving late.
- Pupils arriving after 9:30am are marked as 'late after registers closed', which is recorded as unauthorised absence for that morning session. This mark affects a child's overall attendance figure.
- Attendance Registers are a legal document and staff are required to treat them as such, promptly taking a register at 9am and not changing marks on the register once completed. The school administrator is responsible for inputting register data into our data management system, ScholarPack.

- If a child is absent from school and school has not been informed of the reason for this absence, school are required to follow up by making telephone contact with a parent/carer/guardian (please see Safeguarding Policy for Missing Child Procedure).
- Absence due to illness is authorised if school are informed of this illness by a parent/carer.
- Children suffering from diarrhoea/sickness should not return until 48 hours after their last bout of illness.
- Leave of absence can only be granted by the school in exceptional circumstances according to government requirements. Family holiday cannot be classed as exceptional.
- Termly report cards and annual reports to parents/carers include an attendance figure, an illustration of this attendance figure with context and the number of late arrivals recorded.
- Attendance Figures for each year group are published on the school newsletter, entitled 'Attendance Aces'. The year group with the highest number of attendance points each half term is awarded a prize.
- At the end of each term, pupils who have achieved 100% attendance are awarded with a certificate in assembly.

Attendance and Punctuality Monitoring

The Department for Education define persistent absence at below 90%

- Attendance figures are monitored weekly at cohort level, monthly at individual level half termly for all groups of learners across school.
- Attendance figures and punctuality figures are shared with parents/carers termly via reports and report cards.
- A child who is persistently absent will not make good progress. Where attendance falls below 95%, parents/carers are contacted and the reasons behind absence are explored. Attendance targets will be set and reviewed at agreed intervals.
- Where a child's attendance falls below 90% and the school has a concern over the long term welfare of the child, support from external agencies will be sought to support a rapid improvement in the child's attendance.
- Where a child is late to school four times in any one half term*, a letter is sent informing the parent/carer of this figure and of the importance to arrive at school on time. The parent/carer will be invited to meet with the Headteacher if further support is required. Further lateness would result in an attendance consultation meeting being arranged.

** Four lates in one half term of average length (7 weeks) equates to around 90% punctuality. Following principles laid out in DfE guidelines on attendance, the school classes this as persistent lateness.*

Attendance Consultation Meetings

At the first attendance consultation meeting, the following will be discussed and documented:

1. The child's attendance figure and an explanation of this in terms of number of days' learning lost.
2. Exploration of the reasons behind absences.
3. The support required for the child, the parent/carer or both in improving attendance or punctuality.
4. Any reasonable adjustments that can be made by school to support better attendance.
5. Targets for future attendance set.
6. A second attendance consultation meeting is set.

At the second attendance consultation meeting, the following will be discussed and documented:

1. Progress towards attendance targets.
2. A review of attendance and punctuality figures.
3. The support required for the child, the parent/carer or both in improving attendance or punctuality.
4. Any reasonable adjustments that can be made by school to support better attendance.
5. Targets for future attendance set where necessary.
6. A third attendance consultation meeting is set where necessary.

Leave of Absence

Taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt educational progress. Before completing this application form parent/carers are asked to consider the effect on their child's continuity of education.

The Education regulations state that applications for leave must be made in advance by a parent with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each application is considered individually by the school.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

Head teachers would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional

This is not an exhaustive list and Head teachers must consider the individual circumstances of each case when making a decision on this matter. Where a Head teacher feels that there may be exceptional circumstances which do not fit the criteria, they may refer to the local authority for advice. The decision of the Head teacher is final. Parents who take a child on leave in term time without the permission of the school risk being issued with a penalty notice fine for unauthorised absences.

Additional Attendance Information

Up to date information for parents and carers can be found on the school's website on the 'Attendance' page of the 'About' section. Sicklinghall School follows expectations as set out by the Local Authority (LA) and Department for Education (DfE) with regard to school attendance.

Appendix 1- Application for Leave During Term Time

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Name of pupil(s):

School:

Class(es):

Address:

Telephone No:

Siblings (if different school) Schools attending:

I request permission for my child to be absent from school

From.....To.....Total school
days.....

Exceptional circumstances for request:

(this section must be answered in full and against stated criteria)

Signature of
parent/carer.....Date.....

For school use only

Seen by Head teacher
(signature).....Date.....

Decision
reached.....

Date reply returned to parent
(s).....

Appendix 2- Attendance below 90% Notification to Parent/Carer Letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance has fallen below 90%, which means that your child has been absent from school for at least day every two weeks this academic year. Your child's attendance figure, alongside school's figures for comparison, is below:

Your child's attendance figure	%
Whole school attendance figure	%
Attendance figure for your child's year group	%
Attendance figure for girls/boys (delete as applicable) at this school	%

Attendance at school of less than 90% is classed as persistent absence by the Department for Education. It may be that we as a school are already aware of the specific reasons behind your child's attendance figure, in which case, this letter is for information only.

You are invited to an attendance consultation meeting in school to discuss your child's attendance, to seek the support of school in improving your child's attendance and to set targets to work towards which will improve your child's attendance.

This meeting will take place on DATE at TIME. Please inform the school office if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Appendix 3- Punctuality below 90% Notification to Parent/Carer Letter

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you that your child's has arrived late to school on four or more occasions this half term, which means that s/he has a punctuality figure of below 90%. Your child's apunctuality figure, alongside school's figures for comparison, is below:

Your child's number of late arrivals	%
Whole school average number of late arrivals	%
Average number of late arrivals for your child's year group	%
Average number of later arrivals for girls/boys (delete as applicable) at this school	%

You are invited to an attendance consultation meeting in school to discuss your child's attendance and punctuality, to seek the support of school in improving your child's attendance and punctuality and to set targets to work towards which will improve your child's attendance and punctuality.

This meeting will take place on DATE at TIME. Please inform the school office if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher