

Attendance Policy and Guidelines

“We aim for all our children to develop a love of learning that will last them a lifetime, caring for and respecting the world around them, valuing differences and broadening moral values”

The Solent Schools, Vision, Values and Aims

Responsibility for policy review	Curriculum & Standards Committee
Date reviewed	February 2019
Review cycle	Three years. Next review: Spring 2022
Linked Policies	
Signature: 	5 February 2019
Chair of Governors	Date





Children who do not attend school often become more and more alienated due to poor relationships with the other children and/or adults, and increasing gaps in their learning which means they can fall further and further behind in their learning. Those who attend fully have better relationships and more consistent learning, thus they achieve more highly, making better progress and usually have higher self-esteem and confidence. We strongly believe that there is a strong link between good attendance, standards of behaviour, and teaching and learning and that **all children** have a right to attend and to achieve their full potential.

Policy Statement

It is our intention that all children should attend school unless they are too ill to do so. It is also our policy that they arrive on time in the mornings to ensure the class is not disturbed during lessons and that the child themselves is settled and ready and able to learn.

Start of Sessions

Solent Infant School

The second morning bell is at 9.00 am; by this time children should be in the classroom. The register is taken at 9.00 am and 1.00 pm. Children entering the room after these times are late and will be marked as such. The registers are 'closed' at 9.15 am and children arriving after that time will be marked as U, being so late as to earn an absence for that whole session. The school gates are locked at 9.00 am by the caretaker. All late children must then enter by the main door where their names are taken to ensure the registers are updated for lunch and attendance.

Solent Junior School

The second morning bell is at 8.40 am by this time children should be in the classroom. The register is taken at 8.40 am and 1.00 pm. Children entering the room after these times are late and will be marked as such. The registers are 'closed' at 8.55 am and children arriving after that time will be marked as U, being so late as to earn an absence for that whole session. The school gates are locked at 8.40 am by the caretaker. All late children must then enter by the main door where their names are taken to ensure the registers are updated for lunch and attendance.



Registers

Registers are run on the SIMS optical mark system. **No pupil will be marked present unless in the room at the time even if staff know the child will attend later.** Any staff with information on the reasons for an absence will ensure this is recorded in the registers immediately. The following marks are available:-

Attendance codes, descriptions and meanings

Code	Description
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated Off Site (not Dual Registration)
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual Registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
G	Family Holiday (<u>NOT</u> agreed or days in excess of agreement)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)
L	Late (before register close)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
R	Religious Observance
U	Late (after registration closed)
V	Educational Visit or Trip
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils
Y	Forced and Partial Closure
Z	Pupil not on roll
#	School closed to pupils

NB

- Leave of Absence will be unauthorised unless there are considered to be exceptional circumstances. This will be at the discretion of the Solent Schools Attendance Panel.
- If there is any debate about the type of absence, the Executive Headteacher will decide the coding.
- If parents do not give a reason for absence after 2 letters from the school office the absence is marked as unauthorised.

In July each year (at the end of the school year) the printed registers will be 'bound' and kept for at least 3 more years.



Lateness

Lateness constitutes a failure to attend school on time. Being consistently late often has a very negative impact on a child's learning and does not model good habits. Such children find the missed aspects of their learning difficult to 'pick up' as they will have missed elements of a session. The other children and the teacher are disturbed by late arrival and the late child is usually embarrassed and often worried by their lateness.

At the age and stage of our children it is the parent's responsibility to ensure prompt attendance and a failure to do so stores up many potential problems later in school life. It is also telling the child that school is not important and lateness does not matter.

Leave of absence during term time

These guidelines will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Solent Schools attendance panel.

- All requests for leave of absence for 5 school days (10 sessions) or more, taken in either one block or accumulated over a 12 month period, will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and may be considered for a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- All requests for less than 5 school days (10 sessions) will be considered by the Solent Schools attendance panel. Only those applications considered to be 'exceptional circumstances' will be authorised. In this case each application will be considered on an individual basis and only using the supplementary information provided on the form or attached. It is therefore essential that if you feel your case is exceptional that you include all relevant information and evidence. Proof of evidence may be requested.
- If a pupil's attendance has fallen below 90% over the period of a term, the request is unlikely to be authorised.
- Any requests made for sporting, musical or other examinations must be supported by evidence from the associated body or organisation.
- Requests should be made as soon as possible and at least 4 weeks before the proposed absence unless this is impossible due to the particular circumstance.
- The attendance panel will meet as required in order to ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently.

Systems and Practices to follow up attendance or non-attendance

If the school have not received notification by 12pm on the first day of absence, a phone call will be made to parents/carers, to clarify reasons for absence.





The registers are read weekly by the office staff. Children whose absences have not been explained from the previous weeks will receive a letter to take home. This letter asks for an explanation for absences on the specific dates. This will be repeated the following week. If no explanation (or an invalid one) is given the absence will be declared unauthorised.

At the end of each four week period the registers are printed off and any anomalies checked and corrected. Patterns of absence are looked for and the total absences for any child whose attendance is causing concern, is checked. Parents of that child will then be invited in to meet with the Head of School to discuss concerns.

If there are 3 or more 'lates' in a four week period a letter reminding parents of the need to arrive on time is sent.

Continued and repeated absences, unexplained absences or endemic lateness will result in either a letter from, or an interview with, the Executive Headteacher. The Executive Headteacher has lead responsibility for attendance.

Further action will be taken with all pupils who have had 10 days (20 sessions) of **unauthorised absences**, both cumulative and consecutive over the academic year. In this case, one or more, of the following actions outlined below will be put in place:

- Creating plans to support a pupil with irregular attendance (Pastoral Support Plans) which will be regularly reviewed by all parties involved
- Individual assessments or the referral of the pupil to other services for support
- Requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice in respect of irregular attendance in line with established procedures (after 10 unauthorised sessions)
- Referral to the School Attendance team for consideration of legal action

Where further action is necessary the school will work within established Local Authority Procedures.

Systems to encourage attendance

Children who attend school every day each term are rewarded with a 100% certificate in assembly. Those who attend for the whole year without an absence have a larger more important certificate, given in the final assembly. Children with 98%+ attendance and good medical reasons for the absences will be given a 'Well Done' certificate.





If it is found that there are external factors influencing a child's good attendance this will be dealt with immediately by the school in consultation with parents and other relevant outside agencies. Support and Guidance will be given to enable the child to resume good attendance.

Punctuality

Punctuality and the importance of consistent attendance are both part of the ethos of the school. Children are praised for both. Lateness and poor attendance are not always discussed or obviously disapproved of, with the child, as it is seldom their fault at this age but the parents are contacted. However, all the children are aware that it is not the way to approach school and their learning.

Unauthorised absences and late attendance are published on the child's annual reports and the documentation which is sent on to any school a child may subsequently attend.

All absence notes are kept for at least a term to help assess patterns of absence or reasons for it.

It is the parent's responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence as promptly as possible and provide further information should it be required. If a parent/ carer has not contacted the school by 12pm on the first day of absence, the school will attempt to contact them, to clarify the reason for non-attendance.

Reporting on Attendance

The school reports the attendance of pupils to The Local Governing Body on a regular basis. The Executive Headteacher will become involved if a child's attendance or punctuality causes significant concern.

Attendance figures are discussed during Senior Leadership Team meetings and reported termly to the School Local Governing Body.

Attendance Targets

Targets are set annually by the school. All staff are requested to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality in their classes in an effort to improve our attendance figures. The Local Governors, Heads of School and Executive Headteacher will continue to raise the issues with specific parents as necessary and all parents in general.

