

South Baddesley CE Primary School

Attendance Policy

This policy has been drawn up using a range of national documents including the DfE School Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance 2022 states that

'All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. As set out in section 1, attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school.'

1. Rationale:

At South Baddesley CE Primary School we recognise the value and importance of children receiving a full time education in order for children to achieve academically, as well as develop socially and emotionally. Pupils must attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Good attendance enables pupils to achieve better in all areas of their learning and development. Pupils who attend regularly feel confident and secure within the school's routines and practices. They are able to fully contribute to their learning community and build strong, reliable friendships.

A child whose attendance drops to 90% will miss half a day of school each week, overtime this has a considerable impact on their learning. The link to this DfE [blog](#) describes the impact of poor attendance on pupil learning.

We recognise our responsibilities to support families and ensure pupils attend school regularly; we are committed to supporting all children to achieve, where possible, 100% attendance. We seek advice and support from external agencies to ensure our procedures meet the legal requirements and advocate 'best-practice.'

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils via our school website.

2.1 Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

In order to raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of good attendance and punctuality, we provide additional information regarding attendance via:

- our weekly Bulletin,

- reports on individual pupil attendance and
- individual parent consultations.

Leaders and class teachers encourage pupils to arrive on time to school and offer support to families when this is not possible.

Through regular monitoring of attendance records, we seek to proactively address any emerging attendance difficulties. This normally involves working with parents to identify and overcome barriers to good attendance.

2.2 Headteacher's role

The Headteacher monitors the attendance and punctuality of every pupil. If a pupil's attendance is below 95% for a period of one month or more, the Headteacher will investigate the reasons given for absences and when appropriate contact the pupil's parents to discuss further.

Where patterns of absence continue and a pupil slips into a category of 'persistently absent,' a member of the leadership will make contact with parents and discuss an individual plan of action to support families to improve attendance. Individual plans involve a range of interventions and support, including referring to the support of wider agencies. Appendix one

The Headteacher reports whole school levels of attendance and punctuality to staff and Governors via the termly Headteacher's Report. Universal strategies to improve attendance are discussed and implemented by the leadership team.

The Headteacher makes decisions regarding the authorisation of term-time absences. Such applications must be made in [writing](#) to the Headteacher and sent in advance to the school in person or via the Admin Office email address.

When necessary this is in consultation with the Governors and other local schools. Advice from external professionals is sought if appropriate.

Although each individual absence request is considered separately, it is rare to approve term-time absences. Such absences may only be approved in exceptional and rare circumstances. Where unauthorised absences are taken, it is likely that a fixed-term penalty notice will be administered.

2.3 Responsibilities of staff

All staff actively promote good attendance and punctuality by creating a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.

Teachers ensure that attendance is recorded accurately in registers, both in the morning and afternoon. These records are well maintained and audited by the Admin Team.

Admin Staff respond quickly when a child is late or absent. They contact parents/ carers and record outcomes of conversations accurately so that any necessary follow-up actions can be taken by the Headteacher.

School staff promote good attendance and punctuality by modelling good levels of attendance throughout term time.

2.4 Responsibilities of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to attend school every day unless they are unwell or have an authorised absence.

Pupils are expected to arrive at lessons on time and be ready to start learning. They are asked to follow the visual and written prompts available in their classroom to prepare for the day and start learning immediately.

2.5 Responsibilities of parents/carers

Parents/ carers support the school in maintaining good levels of attendance and punctuality by ensuring that pupils are in school every day, unless they are unwell. They ensure that pupils arrive at school on time.

If a child is absent from school, parents inform school on the first day of absence, subsequent written confirmation may then be required (see 3.3 for further guidance). Advice concerning returning to school after an illness is sought from school staff if necessary.

Parents write written requests in advance, using the schools pro-forma, for term-time absence. As indicated in section 2.2, parents should recognise that absence will only be authorised if the request is considered exceptional.

Parents avoid taking children out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.

3.1 Recording Attendance

Legally, the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day, 8.35 am and again for the afternoon session at 1 pm.

3.2 Lateness/ Punctuality

We operate a rolling start to our day and staggered end, in order to reduce traffic congestion and increase safety at these busy times of the day.

Class	Start time	Finish time
Gruffalo	8.25-8.35am	3.05pm
Elmer	8.25-8.35am	3.05pm
Paddington	8.25-8.35am	3.05pm
Tulane	8.25 -8.35am	2.55pm
Shadow	8.25- 8.35am	2.55pm
Aslan	8.25 - 8.35am	2.55pm

In the morning, children should be dropped at the meadow gate, with parents parking in the Church car park or dropped by the cycle gate, with parents using the voluntary one-way system and drop zone.

Unless given permission by school staff, children should not be dropped at the school front door.

Parents of younger children, in Gruffalo class, may be accompanied from the meadow gate to their classroom.

There is a 10 minute window for children to arrive at school. Children arriving after this window closes will be marked as late.

Registers close at 8.55am

Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with County and Department for Education (DfE) guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.

Pupils who are consistently late are considered as unauthorised absence (Code O) and could be subject to legal action (see section 6 for further detail).

Parents/carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time-keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists, parents/carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered.

If support is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period the school or the Hampshire County Council will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice in accordance with Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance (see section 6 of this policy for further detail).

Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns as necessary with other agencies.

If a late collection is exceptional and cannot be avoided, please contact school as early as possible to inform them of the delay and expected time of arrival.

Collection at the end of the school day is from the playground; parents may use the Church car park and enter through the meadow gate or park in the lanes by school and enter through the cycle gate.

3.3. Reporting absences

If a child is unable to attend school it is vital that school are informed about the reasons for the absence.

If your child is absent you should:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence. This may be by telephone. There is a dedicated absence line for parents to leave a message on or
- Send an email to adminoffice@southbaddesley.hants.sch.uk on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence. *Please do not email staff members directly as we cannot guarantee we will pick these emails up in the morning.*

If your child is absent and we do not have a message from you explaining why, we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence. This is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.
- If we are unable to contact you or have concerns relating to your child's absence, we will follow appropriate Safeguarding procedures such as complete a 'welfare check' or contact an external agency.

3.4 Third Day Absence

If your child is still absent and we have not heard from you, we will:

- Send you a letter to contact the school immediately and to explain the absence. As above, we may also deem it appropriate to follow further Safeguarding procedures.

We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family. However, if your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a child missing in education procedures as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance.

3.5 Ten Days Absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupils who are absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carers then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date contact number. You can update your contact details via the Arbor portal.

3.6 Continued or On-going Absence

If your child misses 10% (3 weeks) or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason they are defined as **persistent absentees**.

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning.

Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. Consequently, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the Local Authority and the Department for Education. If your child has had absence and their attendance level falls below 95% we will contact you to highlight the need to improve attendance.

Children at this school are dependent on their parents/carers, who are responsible for their level of attendance and punctuality.

4. Request for Leave of Absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

There is however, no legal entitlement for time off during term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an application form available from the school office, in advance and before making any travel arrangements.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in Hampshire's Code of Conduct parent/carers will be issued with a fixed penalty fine, or other legal action in accordance with the code (see section 6 for detail).

Schools within the Lymington Pyramid work together and share information regarding requests for leave. It is therefore helpful to inform us if you have a child at another local school so that we can work together to consider requests.

5. Understanding types of absence – Authorised and Unauthorised:

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.

If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.

- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request.

This includes:

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers.

6. Penalty Notices for Non Attendance and other Legal Measures:

In Education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal Measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness

Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:

1. The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

The following legal measures are for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

Legal Measures for absence taken when the Headteacher has declined parent/carers request for leave of absence

Where a pupil has unauthorised absence due to either:

1. non approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence or
2. a holiday that has been taken without permission and the unauthorised absence is for 10 or more sessions (5 days) in any 100 possible school sessions then a penalty notice for non-attendance will be issued.

Where a child has unauthorised absence the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance.

The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. A copy is available from

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendanceguidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

The code of conduct states that:

Schools or Hampshire Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded *U*) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded *L*), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code *O*), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

If a child's unauthorised absence meets any of the above criteria and the family or child does not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a single

Penalty Notice is issued for either:

1. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 10 week school period
2. 1 or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessment or testing where dates are published in advance.

Parents and Carers will be warned of the likelihood of a penalty notice being issued for unauthorised absence either via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the schools attendance policy and website. The penalty notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to one or more parent/carers for each child. N.B This could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday i.e. one Penalty Notice for each child to each parent.

Each penalty notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the penalty notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the Penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid the Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of Penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

For further information parents/carers can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Councils website at:

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learningbehaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm>

7. My child is trying to avoid coming to school.

What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending.

Contact your child's class teacher, immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – it is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to resolve the problem.

7.1 What can I do to encourage my child to attend School?

There are a number of things that will support children attending school regularly:

- Getting enough sleep and getting up in plenty of time each morning.
- Having the correct clothes and equipment.
- Showing an interest and valuing your child's education
- For many parents, your child attending school may be your first experience of being separated from them. This can seem daunting at first for both of you but consistency and a caring supportive home and school life will make the transition a quick and easy experience for you both.

7.2 Leavers

If your child is leaving our school (other than when transferring to secondary school or leaving at the end of Year 6), parents are asked to give the school office comprehensive information about their plans including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a 'Child Missing in Education'. This requires schools and Local Authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Person (s) responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy:

Anne Moir – Headteacher

South Baddesley Governing Body

Date policy approved and adopted by Governing body: May 2022

Review date: October 2025

South Baddesley CE Primary School

Individual attendance support plan

Pupil name:	Date:
Pupil view - things I like about school	Pupil view - things I do not enjoy at school
Things I would like adults to do to help me come to school more often	Parent's view
Agreed next steps:	Review date: