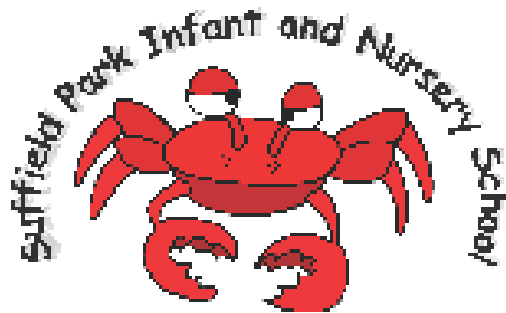


# Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School



*A safe and happy place  
inspiring curiosity, respect and confidence*

## Attendance Policy

Adopted: September 2019

By: Curriculum Committee

Review Date: September 2020

## Statement of intent

Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

(a) to age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2018) ‘School attendance’
- DfE (2015) ‘Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England’
- DfE (2018) ‘Keeping children safe in education’
- DfE (2016) ‘Children missing education’

1.2. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- The implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School.
- Ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The named governor for attendance is Viv Lennox (Chair of Governors)

2.2. The named person for school attendance is the head teacher Nichola Stewart. The head teacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school, and distributing these to parents.

2.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for:

- Following the Attendance-Policy and ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

2.4. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.

2.5. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

## 3. Definitions

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

- **"Absence"** as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.
  
- An **“authorised absence”** as:
  - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
  - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
  - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
  - An absence due to a family emergency( with head teacher discretion)
  
- An **“unauthorised absence”** as:
  - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
  - Absences which have never been properly explained.
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
  - Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
  
- **“Persistent absenteeism”** as:
  - Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year **for any reason.**

#### **4. Training of staff**

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their training.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction alongside safeguarding.

#### **5. Absence procedures**

- 5.1. Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of their child’s absence.
- 5.2. A text message will be sent to the parent of any child who has not reported their child’s absence on the first day that they do not attend school by 9:45. If this is not responded to a phone call will be made by 10:30 on the same day.
- 5.3. If there is a no response for two days, a staff member will make a home visit if appropriate and safe to do so. A welfare check from police may also be requested.

- 5.4. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the head teacher.
- 5.5. The school will inform the LA, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without permission.
- 5.6. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

## **6. Contact information**

- 6.1. Parents are responsible for:
  - Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
  - Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
  - Updating the school if their details change.

## **7. Attendance register**

The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed

- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Education visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Duel registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

## **8. Attendance officer**

- 8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to an attendance panel with the head teacher who will attempt to resolve the situation through a parent agreement.
- 8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the attendance officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

## **9. Lateness**

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. The school day starts at 8:55 and registration begins promptly at 9:05. Pupils should be in their classroom by 9:05
- 9.3. Registers are marked by 9:15. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 9.4. The register closes at 9:30. Pupils will receive a mark of unauthorised absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 9.5. Pupils attending after 9:15 will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.

## **10. Term-time leave**

- 10.1. At Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 10.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- 10.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.
- 10.4. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher.
- 10.5. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 10.6. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
  - Immediately before and during assessment periods
  - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
  - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason
- 10.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

## **11. Missing children**

- 11.1. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:
  - The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
  - The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
  - A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
  - The following areas will be systematically searched:
    - All classrooms and corridors
    - All toilets
    - The library

- Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
  - If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
  - The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
  - The police will be contacted.
  - The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 11.2. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- 11.3. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 11.4. All staff will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises or stay safe within the location they are being taught in.
- 11.5. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 11.6. The headteacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 11.7. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

## **12. Religious observances**

- 12.1. The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals.
- 12.2. Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

## **13. Appointments**

- 13.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.



- 13.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be shown to the school office.
- 13.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.
- 13.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## **14. Young carers**

- 14.1. The school understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- 14.2. The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- 14.3. The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

## **15. Rewarding good attendance**

The school acknowledges and rewards good attendance in the following ways:

- Awarding 'George the Bear' to the class with the best weekly attendance during Friday's celebration assembly.
- Half-termly attendance certificates to each individual child with 100% attendance.
- Half-termly attendance reports to parents.

## **16. Monitoring and review**

- 16.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
- 16.2. Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School's attendance target is 96 percent.
- 16.3. This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is October 2019
- 16.4. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

## Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers and classroom assistants. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the SLT.
2. All parents/carers receive a half termly attendance report on their child celebrating good attendance and warning of the impact of poor attendance.
3. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the head teacher daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If no contact has been made by parents on day 3 a member will conduct a home visit if appropriate. If there are concerns, a welfare call from the Police may be requested.
6. In appropriate circumstances, if a pupil's attendance falls below 93 percent, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard.
7. In appropriate circumstances, if a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and parents are invited to discuss this with the head teacher.
8. The pupil's attendance is monitored for two weeks and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the head teacher and set targets for their child. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, advice will be sought and acted on from the LA Attendance Duty Team.
9. After the two-week monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the head teacher to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to 96 percent.
10. If targets are not met, parents can be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice.
11. If no improvements are made parents will be invited to start the Fast Track Process. Further targets will be set and if not they will be referred to LA for prosecution.