

SOUTH VIEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date Reviewed: September 2013

By Standards/Governing Body

Next Review Due: September 2014

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SOUTH VIEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, CROWLAND

The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both regularly and punctually, it is everybody's responsibility to create a pattern of regular attendance. If a child's attendance falls below 90% throughout primary school, he/she will miss out on one full year of education.

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to extend their potential. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored regularly with the school seeking to work actively with parents to ensure a regular pattern is maintained. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:-

- attainment in school
- relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships
- confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

96%+ Excellent	Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
94-95% Average	Well done, strive to build on this.
85-93% Unsatisfactory	Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with the school <u>urgently</u> to improve the situation.
Below 85% Unacceptable	Absence IS causing SERIOUS CONCERN. It IS affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. We will work with you and the Education Welfare Officer [EWO] to improve your child's attendance.

Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Only the school can 'authorise' absence. The school will not assess all reasons as 'valid'.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

Prior to the engagement of the EWO, the school will issue letters to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupils' absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will prevent the need for EWO involvement.

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 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'*

The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to Lincolnshire County Council using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your 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. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.55am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **9.05am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays In Term Time:

Amendments have been made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. These amendments came into force on 1st September 2013. The amendments now make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. As a result all holiday requests from 1st September 2013 will be unauthorised unless exceptional circumstances can be given.

Attendance penalty notices (fines) have been brought into line with all other types of notice to allow local authorities to act faster on prosecutions. Details can be found on the Department for Education website in the Schools section under Pupil Support.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.