Attendance Policy

Southmead Primary School



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| **Approved by:** | Full Governing Body | **Date: 4th February 2020** |
| **Last reviewed on:** | 12th July 2016 |
| **Next review due by:** | When DCC model version is updated |

# Aims of the Attendance Policy

In 2013, the government changed the regulations regarding parents requesting holidays during term time. The circumstances have to be considered “*Exceptional*” – the fact that a holiday has already been booked, paid for etc is not considered exceptional. Neither is financial hardship. The law states that permission is granted for absence during term – time at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Home schooling is by law also approved by the Headteacher on an individual basis. Parents have a legal right to request flexible schooling. School have adopted the DCC policy.

Please appreciate that most requests for holidays during term time will not be authorised, but each request will be considered on its merit. The sort of circumstances that may be considered could be a death in the family, military leave, exceptional seasonal work, hospital or emergency medical appointments (*not* regular dental check ups). Most requests are for holidays and these are no longer considered appropriate.

# When your child starts school

Children must be in full-time education by the start of the term following their fifth birthday. However, it is beneficial for children to be in school as much as possible from the start of term following their fourth birthday.

# Illness

If a pupil is poorly and will not be in school, parents / carers should inform the office by 9.15am. We have a dedicated phone line for absences where parents / carers can leave a message if the call is made out of office hours. Parents / carers should phone every day their child is absent, unless they have had sickness and diarrhoea when it is Southmead school policy for pupils to be absent from school for 48 hours after the last bout of being poorly. This is to reduce the spread of germs to the rest of the children, as per NHS advice.

**Attendance and Absence**

If pupils are going to be absent for any reason during the school day Parents / Carers should collect an absence form (appendix one) or medical appointment absence form (appendix two) from the office. Please allow 2 weeks for the absence to be authorised before the child is taken out of school.

It is important for children to attend school regularly as it has been proven that children can only do their best and flourish at school if they are present on a regular basis. Children who are late for school and who miss school, often achieve less well than their peers. They also lack self esteem and find it difficult to build and maintain friendships.

The school has a duty to monitor children’s attendance. It is a priority issue for Ofsted and it is the school’s duty to keep abreast of any circumstances that mean children are not in school. Any holiday requests are only authorised if there are exceptional circumstances. If children are taken on holiday in term time, without the prior approval of the school, Parents / Carers are liable for a financial penalty and in extreme cases there are legal implications for parents who do not act within the law.

**Procedure for dealing with pupils’ absences.**

In the first instance, when a pupil is absent from school without notification, school will attempt to contact the Parent / Carers to check that the child is safely at home, and to determine why they have not arrived at school. Contact is prioritised by any concerns. If there is no response from the Parent / Carer, other contacts (provided by parent/carer) are contacted until we know where the child is. Any children who are on the vulnerable list and those who have ongoing attendance issues, are identified to the EWO on the same day. All reasons for absence are recorded.

**Ongoing procedures for attendance monitoring**

* Weekly meetings are held between administrator and EWO to monitor, identify problems and develop strategies to help promote good attendance.
* Classes are monitored weekly for attendance and those attaining the best percentage are mentioned in assemblies weekly and receive an award.
* An Attendance leaflet is distributed to parents to explain the importance of attending school regularly and the impact of poor attendance
* Letters are sent from the headteacher to parents/carers of children who are struggling with attendance and lateness, to offer meetings to develop support. (Appendices three and four.)
* Letters are sent to parents to promote awareness of any attendance issues
* Letters are sent from EWO to children who fall below the recommended level for attendance
* Records are kept of all letters sent
* Issues with attendance are identified as soon as possible, to explore any early help that may be offered to support the child and parent, including referral to other agencies such as school nurse
* The importance of regular attendance and school procedures for reporting absence is included in every weekly school newsletter
* Lateness awareness letters are sent to parents with the offer of support to work with them to help get children in to school (Appendix four.)

**Legal Requirements**

## The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/contents/made) These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

## Term-time holiday

The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made) (currently allow Headteacher to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

## The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/contents/made) These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children’s regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Review date:

Approved at

Signed …………M. Shapland Date …12.7.16.

Chair of Southmead Governing Body

**APPENDIX TWO**

Wrafton Road, Braunton, North Devon. EX33 2BU.

T: 01271 812448 E: admin@southmead.devon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Gillett



**Medical Absence Request Form**

*To: Headteacher of Southmead Primary School*

I wish to apply to have an absence authorised for;

Child’s Name ……………………………………..……………………… Class ………......…….

Apt Date ……………………………………………….………………… Apt Time …….........…

Time Leaving School: ............................................... Time Returning to school: ....................

Name of Doctor / Dentist / Hospital Consultant / Other (please specify)

....................................................................................................................................

Name of Practice........................................................................................................

Signature of Parent/Carer ………………………………...…………. Date ……...……

Authorised by Headteacher ........................................................... Date ................

**WHERE POSSIBLE, PLEASE BOOK APPOINTMENTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS**

**APPENDIX THREE**

Wrafton Road, Braunton, North Devon. EX33 2BU.

T: 01271 812448 E: admin@southmead.devon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Gillett

DATE

Dear Parents/Carers of ..................................................... Class.............

We would like to bring to your notice that your child has been late for school on ....... occasions this month. In line with government and local authority guidelines, persistent lateness is an issue that school has a duty to inform the Education Welfare Officer of, for them to investigate.

Children can only flourish and develop at school if they attend punctually and regularly. We appreciate your cooperation with school to help your child achieve their potential.

If you are having ongoing problems getting your child to school on time, please let us know and we will try to help and offer support where we can. If you would like to discuss reasons we are unaware of that are contributing to your child being late, please make an appointment to see Mrs Gillett, our headteacher.

**APPENDIX FOUR**

Wrafton Road, Braunton, North Devon. EX33 2BU.

T: 01271 812448 E: admin@southmead.devon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Gillett

Date:

To the Parent/Carer of ....................................................... Class ................

**Re: Attendance**

We would like to raise your awareness of your child’s school percentage of attendance at school, which on routine monitoring was ........ This falls below the minimum requirement of 96% set by the Department of Education. Attendance levels below 90% are referred to the Education Welfare officer.

We understand that illness may have contributed to the figure above and that is unavoidable. However, if you feel that there are exceptional circumstances that school are unaware of and you need support, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment with Mrs Gillett.

We appreciate your cooperation and know that you will wish to work with us to ensure your child is able to do their best at school by attending regularly. We look forward to seeing an improvement on the next monitoring of pupils attendance.