



Silsden Primary School

Pupil Attendance Policy

Date of Governing Board Approval: September 2022 (update Dec 22)
Review Date: September 2023

Rationale

We recognise that regular school attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the opportunities which school offers them. We know the importance of continuity and progression in the learning process and that this can be disrupted by children not attending school regularly. We acknowledge the responsibility we have in the early years to foster in children and parents' good habits of regular attendance and punctuality.

Aims

- The school recognises the clear link between attendance and attainment and encourages the highest possible levels of attendance for individuals, groups and the school as a whole.
- To make excellent attendance a priority so that all pupils can achieve their potential
- To keep pupils safe from risks associated with poor attendance
- To match or exceed national attendance and persistent absence figures
- To involve parents/carers as partners in ensuring pupils do not miss school unnecessarily
- To maintain procedures on the use of class registration
- To tackle unauthorised absence and persistent absence effectively
- To report on the success of the Attendance Policy termly to the Governing Body
- To use data effectively to identify and address attendance related issues
- To ensure that the school has an effective partnership with the Attendance and Prosecution Team and other relevant agencies

Responsibilities

The Governing Board is responsible for scrutinising the school's attendance data termly and for ensuring this policy is followed.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Take a lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile in the school
- ensuring that this policy is followed.
- Monitoring the attendance of groups and individuals and reporting this data to the Governing Board.
- Chairing the half termly meeting to review attendance and consider appropriate intervention in all attendance concern cases (including all children with attendance below 95%).
- To consider requests for leave of absence requests during term time.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school each day and on time
- Talking to parents/carers or teachers about any problems that might make staying at home tempting

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring pupils attend school on a daily basis and on time. The aim is for 100% attendance.
- Informing the school office if a pupil is going to be absent from school **by 9.30am on each day of absence.**
- Avoiding taking holidays in term time. The school does not authorise requests for children to be taken out of school for a holiday during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.
- Making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible
- Informing a member of Senior Management Team/Welfare Inclusion Co-ordinator of any issues that might affect a child's attendance
- Participate and cooperate in support and interventions offered by school and other agencies

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring the register is taken and submitted each morning and afternoon within the first 10 minutes
- Reporting any unexpected absences immediately to the School Office
- Liaising with the Safeguarding Leaders/Senior Management Team if there is a concern regarding an individual child's attendance.

The Administrative Assistants are responsible for:

- Logging on SIMS any reasons for absence received

- Reporting any absences where the reasons given are of concern to the Family Liaison Officer / member of SMT.

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Reporting any absences from the Vulnerable Children's List to the Welfare Inclusion Co-ordinator by 9.30am.
- Contacting parent/carers of all children with an unreported absence by PING by 9.45am.
- For non VP pupils, this is followed up by a telephone call if no response has been received by 11am to primary and secondary contact.
 - If contact is still not made, report to Welfare Inclusion Co-ordinator.
 - Receiving and processing Leave of Absence Request Forms (including consulting with headteacher on whether Leave of Absence constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'/ making Penalty Fine referral if required/ keeping spreadsheet of all Leave of Absence requests and outcomes)

The Welfare Inclusion Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Following-up any absences from the Vulnerable Children's List by phoning primary and/or secondary contacts before 10am.
- If no contact is made by 11am a home visit should be made with another member of the Senior Management Team.
- If no contact is made by 1pm consideration will be made in conjunction with the Headteacher to contact external agencies such as the police, social workers, EWO etc.
- Reinforcing the message on excellent attendance in all dealings with parents/carers and staff
- Targeting pupils for further intervention in line with the guidelines for tackling poor attendance
- Engaging with parents/carers to address any identified issues
- Attending the half-termly Attendance Meeting to discuss individual children with attendance concerns.
- Keeping accurate records of interventions on CPOMS in individual cases
- Making referrals to the Attendance and Prosecution Team.

Monitoring attendance

Children whose attendance drops below 95% or whose attendance is of concern are discussed at the Attendance Team Meeting every half term. The group may consider a contact by the Welfare Inclusion Co-ordinator or Headteacher to discuss attendance and offer support if required, a letter of concern from the headteacher. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored by the group. If attendance falls below 90% a further letter is issued and improvement is monitored over the next half term.

Where attendance is not improved by these means we will make a referral to the Attendance and Prosecution Team, who will issue a formal warning leading to prosecution if required.

Requests for a change in routine: If anyone rings school to ask a child to leave school early, or to do anything which is not part of the child's usual routine (go to a friend's house; Grandma's etc.) and we do not know the person as a regular carer, we will phone the child's parent to confirm the arrangement.

Reporting Attendance:

Each pupil's attendance record will form part of the curriculum report to parents, sent home at the end of the summer term and in the interim reports during the year. The number of possible and actual authorised and unauthorised absences will be detailed. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the following attendance judgement statements will be made (compared to national attendance average of 96%):

99.5% - 100% - excellent

97% – 99.4% Good

95-96.9% - Satisfactory

90 -94.9% - Unsatisfactory

89.9% or below – Serious concern / neglect

Encouraging a positive attitude to attendance:

Weekly – The class/es with the highest attendance for the week are given a 15 minutes golden time to be used at the classes discretion.

Half-termly – Children who have had a 100% attendance over the half-term will be acknowledged and given 100% attendance wrist band which they can wear in school.

Yearly - Children with 100% attendance for the academic year will be rewarded with a trip e.g 10 pin bowling.

Authorised / Unauthorised Absences

The legal requirements are that school must indicate in the register whether absences are authorised or unauthorised. A pupil's absence can only be authorised by the Governing Body or the Headteacher on their behalf. The criteria which the school uses for authorising absence are in line with legal requirements and advice provided by the Bradford LA and are as follows: -

Reason for Absence	Remarks
Illness, medical and dental appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is authorised absence. Pupils should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Sight of an appointment card is advisable if a pupil is an irregular attender. If a pupil is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, or returns home because of illness, no absence need be recorded for that session. Schools should keep a record of pupils leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools and EWOs can consult the School Health Service, or the pupil's GP. A pupil receiving medical treatment on site should be marked 'present'.
Days of religious observance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.
Reason for Absence	Remarks
Dual Registration in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or special schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The law allows for dual registration of pupils at both a PRU or special school and another local school. This helps, for example, to ease a phased return to mainstream education. Where a pupil is dually registered at institution X and Y, institution X marks the pupil authorised absent while they are attending institution Y and vice-versa. Both institutions share responsibility for the child. Failure to attend either institution at the proper time without good reason is unauthorised absence.
Family holidays term time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents should not normally take pupils on holidays in term. Following the statutory regulations from September 2013, the headteacher will not authorise leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Parents will need to write to the headteacher explaining these exceptional circumstances and request leave of absence. Cost and convenience of holiday do not constitute exceptional circumstances. Leave of absence requests should be completed using the school pro-forma by the child's parent/s at least 10 days before the proposed absence. If the headteacher does not agree absence and the pupil goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised. Parents could be liable to a Fixed Penalty Charge if their child's absence is unauthorised. If parents keep a child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.
Suspension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pupil suspended for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school. Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded pupil is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. If a permanent exclusion is confirmed, the pupil's name should be removed from the school roll on the school day either: after the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion; or on expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made; or, if before that, the pupil takes up a place elsewhere. Meanwhile absence should be recorded as authorised.
Traveller child when the family is travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To help ensure continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. This means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. <input type="checkbox"/> While the Traveller is away, the base school holds the place open and records absence as authorised. <input type="checkbox"/> Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.
Family bereavements, or child caring for a sick or disabled family member (young carers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Schools should respond sensitively to requests to attend funerals or associated events and have discretion to authorise such absences. <input type="checkbox"/> Similarly, schools may authorise limited duration absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made (see also Section 3 of the Circular).
Special occasions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Schools should consider each request individually. Only exceptional occasions warrant leaves of absences. For example, attending the wedding of a family member would be acceptable, but a day's absence for a birthday or a shopping trip in school hours would not. <input type="checkbox"/> Schools should consider: the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one-off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; the pupil's overall attendance pattern.
Public performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Local Authority must licence a pupil to take part in a public performance. <input type="checkbox"/> Agreed participation should be treated as authorised absence.
Lateness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival which could provide grounds for prosecution. <input type="checkbox"/> Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open. Thirty minutes from the beginning of registration would be reasonable, but schools can set shorter periods. <input type="checkbox"/> In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period.

Guidance for staff on registration

Morning registers (Nursery to year 6)

Staff should submit their registers at 9:05am

Pupils who are not present in the classroom by 9:05am are marked as absent (using the code N)

Children arriving in school after the doors are closed must sign in at the school office

Children arriving after 9:05am will be marked as late by the school office

Children arriving after 9:20am will be marked as U

Afternoon registers (Nursery to year 6)

Staff should submit their registers 10 minutes after the start of the afternoon session.

Pupils who are not present at that time are marked as absent (using the code N)

If a child goes home early with an adult, the adult must sign the child out at the school office giving the reason.