Savile Park Primary Attendance policy

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 13 December 2022
Last reviewed on:	December 2022	
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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

> Promoting good attendance

> Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

> Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled

> Acting early to address patterns of absence

> Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

> Promoting good attendance and punctuality habits from an early age

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

> Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

> Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

> The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

> Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

> Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

> Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

> Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

> Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance

> Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school

> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

> Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

> Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

> Having an oversight of data analysis

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

> Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

> Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

> Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

> Organising targeted intervention and support to pupils and families with the support of other school staff

> Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

> Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

> Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

> Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mary Bradley and can be contacted via the school office.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office, twice per day (morning and afternoon register)

3.6 School Office staff

School office staff will:

> Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

> Add information about attendance and punctuality accurately and promptly onto SIMS

> If a child arrives late after attending an appointment the office staff need to amend the register to reflect the child's arrival, changing the code and noting the time they arrived

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

› Make sure their child attends everyday on time

› Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return

› Provide the school with more than 2 emergency contact number for their child ensuring that at least one contact lives at a different address to the child

› Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

› Attend school every day on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day (by 08:50 am at Heath and 09:00 am at Moorfield) and once at the beginning of the second session (by 1:00 pm at Heath and 1:10 pm at Moorfied). It will mark whether every pupil is:

› Present

› Attending an approved off-site educational activity

› Absent

› Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

› The original entry

› The amended entry

› The reason for the amendment

› The date on which the amendment was made

› The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

› Whether the absence is authorised or not

› The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

› The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:45 am (Heath) and 08:55 am (Moorfield) on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken by 08:50 am at Heath and 09:00 am at Moorfield will be kept open until 08:55 am at Heath and 09:05 am at Moorfield. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:50 pm at Heath and 1:00 pm at Moorfield.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling with the school office staff (see also section 7), or leaving a message on the answer phone.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment at least 24 hours prior to the appointment taking place.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed will be marked as being late with the child's arrival time noted, using the appropriate code

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

> Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school follows a first day calling procedure (see below)

- *School will telephone the first name on the contact list.*

- *If there is no response, school will ring the numbers you have provided in the order you have stated until a reply is received. We expect that parents/carers will provide a contact that lives at a different address.*

- *If we have had no response, we will send a text message for school to be contacted, if no contact is made a home visit may be made if possible, by either school staff or other agencies working with the family.*

- *If we have no response a member of the SLT will be informed and will risk assess the level of concern*

- *If appropriate school will contact the Police, to carry out a welfare check, if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child.*

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

> Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence via termly letters and on the child's annual school report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

It is illegal to take children out of school for holidays or other reasons during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. School are in session for 38 weeks per year, so there are opportunities to take children on holiday /attend other events during the remaining 14 weeks.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances'

o   Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

o   Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be supported by documentation from the organisation.

o   Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.

o   Farming families, whose work patterns mean they cannot holiday during the summer holiday months.

o   To attend Religious observance (limited to 2 days per academic year) – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

o   Services such as the wedding or funeral of an immediate family member (limited to 1 day)

o   Other compassionate circumstances e.g family illness or family crisis

o   Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issues. Evidence must be provided from a qualified professional such as a doctor.

o   Where there are other factors which the Head teacher may consider exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the Local Authority for advice.

o   Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

o   It should be noted that financial consideration are not deemed exceptional circumstances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Please note no work will be provided for a child's period of absence, unless there are exceptional medical circumstances relating to the child.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days, per child. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. This is for any absence of between 5 and 15 days.

Any unauthorised absence of 15 days or more results in a court summons

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

> The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
> One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

> Weekly class attendance celebrated in the Friday 'Gold assembly'. The winning class receives a certificate
> Attendance displays in the halls at both the Moorfield and Heath sites.
> Individual rewards/charts for attendance and punctuality.
> Termly and yearly 100% attendance awards
> Information sent to parents/carers via social media and monthly newsletters

7. Attendance monitoring

School has created an attendance monitoring spreadsheet, which is updated weekly using data inputted into the class registers on the SIMS system. It provides a pupils current percentage attendance, allows filtering to identify pupil characteristics and groupings, thus allowing school to robustly monitor attendance.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will

> Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
> Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

› Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

› Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

› Provide regular attendance reports to class teacher, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

› Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

› Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

› Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

› Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

› Send letters home

› Arranges attendance panel meetings

› Refer to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

› Prepare individual attendance management plans

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum biannually by Jane Boylan (HT). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

› Child protection and safeguarding policy

› Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious

		observance
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day