



ATTENDANCE POLICY

2026-2027

Headteacher Signature: 

Chair of Governors Signature: 

Date: September 2026

Date of next review: September 2027



Southwick Community Primary School & NEW BEGINNINGS NURSERY

ATTENDANCE POLICY - SEPTEMBER 2026

Aims

Promote a culture where excellent attendance and punctuality are valued by all members of the school community.

Create a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued and eager to attend school.

Ensure attendance is monitored accurately and concerns are addressed promptly through a graduated, supportive approach.

Reduce persistent and severe absence through targeted intervention and multi-agency working where appropriate.

Promote equality by ensuring that disadvantaged pupils, vulnerable children and those with additional needs receive the support they require to attend school regularly.

Ensure every pupil has the opportunity to achieve their full academic, social and emotional potential through regular attendance.

To achieve whole school attendance of at least 96%

Foster a shared responsibility for attendance between pupils, parents and carers, school staff, governors, the local authority and partner agencies.

Legislation and Guidance

What does the law say?

This policy has been developed in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance relating to school attendance. The school is committed to meeting its legal responsibilities while working in partnership with pupils, parents, carers, the local authority and other agencies to promote excellent attendance and remove barriers to regular school attendance.

In line with the law relating to term time absence and in line with school policy, requests for holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [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.

Procedures and Responsibilities

Procedure	Staff responsible
<u>Attendance Letter to All</u> At the beginning of the academic year, an attendance letter is sent to all children, reminding parents of the law around term time absence and holidays and informing them that holidays will not be authorised during term time, unless parents/carers can prove exceptional circumstances.	SLT Office staff
<u>Attendance Below National Average- Early Intervention</u> At the beginning of the academic year, a list of children with attendance below 96% from last academic year to be given to teachers. Teachers to speak to children in relation to encouraging good attendance this year.	Office staff Teachers
<u>Registration</u> Teachers to complete their register on a morning and submit this no later than 9.05am. The register will also be completed as soon as the children return from lunch.	Teachers
<u>Absence Calls</u> Call made to parents of absent children by 9.30am. Reasons for absence logged on CPOMS, with SLT and class teachers tagged in incident.	Office staff
<u>Weekly Celebration</u> Class with the highest attendance for the week to receive a prize in Friday's celebration assembly. Each Friday, a message will be put on the school app and on the website, celebrating the class with the best attendance for that week.	Office staff SLT School Business Manager

<u>Attendance Tracking and Monitoring</u> Each week, office staff collate weekly and cumulative attendance for each child. All staff then have access to this. This is used to monitor where attendance falls below the national average (96%), where children become a persistent absentee (attendance is below 90%) and where children are no longer a persistent absentee. Contact is made weekly by office staff to inform parents/carers of any of these factors. Staff will express concern relating to their child's attendance and offer support to the family in order to help them improve this or will acknowledge improvements in attendance and encourage families to continue to build on this. All contact with parents must be recorded on CPOMS, with SLT and other year group teachers tagged in incidents.	Office staff Teachers
<u>Graduated Response to the Attendance Pathway</u> <u>Beginning of each school year</u> Letter sent to all parents of children whose attendance was beneath the expected national level of 96% at the end of the previous academic year. Letter explains to parents that attendance will be monitored and support can be provided by family Support Worker. <u>Stage 1</u> Letter 1 Letter sent to parents of children whose attendance has fallen below the expected national level of 96%. Letter explains to parents that attendance will be monitored and support can be provided by family Support Worker. Attendance letter 1 children monitored for six weeks. Teachers to speak to parents weekly during the three week monitoring period, discussing the child's attendance for that week. Letter 1a Letter sent to parents of children whose attendance has improved however is still below the expected national level of 96%. Letter explains to parents that attendance will be monitored and support can be provided by family Support Worker. <u>Stage 2</u> Letter 2 Letter sent out to parents of children where there is no improvement in attendance and parents are asked to attend	SLT Office staff Teachers SLT Teachers Office staff SLT Office staff SLT

attendance meeting with SLT. A 3-week attendance target will be set. Teachers to speak to parents weekly during the three week monitoring period, discussing the child's attendance for that week.	Parents
<u>Stage 3</u>	
Letter 3	
Letter sent out to parents if attendance has not improved by the end of the 3 week monitoring period, informing parents of the intention to refer to Attendance Team if there is 2.5 days or more of absence within the next six weeks.	Office staff SLT
<u>Stage 4:</u>	
In line with Local Authority threshold, 2.5 days of absence within the six week monitoring period results in referral to the Attendance Team.	Office staff SLT Attendance Team

Parents/Carers

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that, unless too ill to attend, their child attends school every day. In any instance that the child is too ill to attend school, parents should inform school as soon as they are aware of this.

Parents also have a responsibility to inform school of any medical/dental appointments that children are attending during school time. Parents should provide evidence of these appointments, if requested by school.

Governors

Our Attendance Governor is Sue Ord. Governors will oversee the implementation of the policy and hold the head teacher to account on all matters involving attendance through an effective Attendance Policy that is embedded and followed by all relevant staff.

Strategies for promoting attendance

Southwick Community Primary School wants every child to reach their full potential and the best possible attendance is needed in order to achieve this. Poor attendance negatively affects schoolwork, relationships and means children cannot possibly achieve their full potential.

Southwick Community Primary School celebrates good and improved attendance. Every week, classes compete for the 'Class of the Week' prize- a prize given to the class with the best attendance. During Friday's celebration assembly, the attendance of each class for that week is shared with children.

The attendance 'race display' in the hall will be updated weekly to celebrate the winning class for that week and to track attendance for classes for the term. At the end of the term, the class who 'win' the race will be given a prize.

At the end of each term, children with 100% attendance and those whose attendance has improved significantly since the previous half term will receive a prize.



At the end of the academic year, all children with 100% attendance receive a prize, with two children drawn at random, receiving a star prize.

Staff will recognise improvements in attendance and this recognition will be shared with children and their parents/carers.

Each Friday, a message will be put on the school app and on the website, celebrating the class with the best attendance for that week.

Recent data analysis identified that Friday attendance tended to be lower than that of other days. SLT consulted with staff and children to identify how we could work together to improve Friday attendance figures. As a result of consultations with staff and children, it was highlighted that children would prefer to have 'Pizza & Pasta Friday'. Enrichment afternoon was also introduced to encourage increased attendance offering activities such as; football, cookery, games, mindfulness, art

Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once at the start of the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is present or absent. Codes are recorded to give details of absence.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken and returned to the office by 9.00am.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to illness, as soon as practically possible by telephone. If no call is made, office staff will contact parents by 9.30am of the day they are absent, to find out the reason for the absence.

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Medical evidence will not be asked for unnecessarily.

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

Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.



Parents and carers are asked to share appointment cards with school when informing staff that their child will be attending a medical appointment during school hours.

Applications for *Leave of Absence* in term time must also be made in advance and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the head teacher. Requests for Leave of Absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

School will ring by 9.30am if no reason for absence has been given to school.

Reporting to parents

(Refer to School Procedures)

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.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice follows the Local Authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices. This 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 without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority may then prosecute the parents/carers.

School will only refer to the Attendance Team when the 4 stage model (see grid above) has been exhausted and there is still no improvement in attendance.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Child Protection Policy



Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

SEMH Policy

Monitoring and Review

The head teacher will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and reporting to the Governing Body on its effectiveness.

Attendance Matters

ATTENDANCE DURING ONE SCHOOL YEAR	HOW MANY DAYS ABSENCE	HOW MANY WEEKS ABSENCE	HOW MANY LESSONS MISSED
95%	9 days	2 weeks	40 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	80 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	120 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	160 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11 weeks	230 lessons
65%	67 days	13 weeks	270 lessons

Appendix 2

100% No learning days lost	95% 40 missed lessons 2 whole weeks	90% 80 lessons missed 4 whole weeks	85% 120 lessons missed 6 whole weeks	80% 160 lessons missed 8 whole weeks
				
Very best chance of success	Off to a good start	Less chance of success	Harder to make progress PERSISTENT ABSENTEE	Not fair on your child PERSISTENT ABSENTEE

Punctuality Matters

8.45am

The school day begins. **On time = NO LEARNING TIME LOST**



9.00am

15 minutes late a day means 9 whole days of teaching lost each year.



9.15am

30 minutes late a day means 18 whole days of teaching lost each year.



9.30am

45 minutes late a day means 27 whole days of teaching lost each year.