



Southwark Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

2016 - 2017

Review Date: Sept 2017

**Aim:** To ensure that the school achieves 97.0% attendance and no more than 1.0% unauthorised absence by July 2017.

**Rationale:** Children can only achieve their full intellectual potential if they arrive at school regularly and on time. The effect of poor attendance and late arrival is apparent in the achievement of the child as early as Foundation Stage. If Southwark is to achieve its objective of ensuring that all children fulfil their potential, every child needs to attend school as much as possible. Statistics show that 77.3% of our pupils attend for 95 to 100% of the time and 96.5% attend at least 90% of the time. The remaining 3.5%, mainly “transient” pupils suffer significant multiple disadvantages in many cases and this must be rigorously addressed.

**Objectives:**

- To ensure a consistent approach to registration
- To monitor lateness and follow it up consistently
- To adopt a positive approach to promoting attendance and punctuality via rewards
- To follow up on persistent absentees
- To have an open dialogue with parents whose child’s lateness or attendance is a concern

**Procedures and Processes:**

1. All teaching staff will attempt to register children accurately, as this is a legal requirement.
2. The importance of regular attendance and punctuality will be emphasised in admission meetings.
3. Attendance Support Officer will monitor the registers.
4. Any absences that are not accounted for will initially be referred back to the class teacher.
5. Where the class teacher is unsure of the reason/cannot ascertain the reason/finds the reason for absence unacceptable, he/she will refer the matter **immediately** to the Attendance Officer.
6. The Head of School and the Attendance Officer are responsible for the final authorisation/un-authorisation of any absence.
7. The Head of School will hold weekly meetings with the Attendance Officer to consider the % attendance of children in the school and make referrals if necessary.
8. The Attendance Officer will hold meetings with parents where a problem continues with attendance and will also consider other means, such as prosecution if necessary.
9. The Attendance Officer will support the families of persistent absentees in difficulties as far as resources allow, recognising that ultimately, a child’s attendance at school is the responsibility of the parent.
10. Especially difficult social situations that impact seriously on attendance may be referred to the school’s DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) for multi-agency work or CAF (Common Assessment Framework).
11. In ongoing cases where absence is not yet “persistent” but is a problem (i.e. between 90% and 95% with no single explanation) case work will be undertaken by the Family Attendance Support Worker.
12. The Attendance Support Officer will contact parent/carers on the first day of absence if no reason has been given, priority will be given to calling families where attendance has been an issue in the past.

13. Should the Attendance Support Officer be unable to contact the parents of absent children, appropriate contact letters will be sent.
14. If a pupil is absent directly before and/or after a school holiday and the school have received no contact or evidence from the parent/carer, a warning letter will be issued.
15. The Attendance Team will train new staff on the policies and procedures and give basic SIMs training to ensure correct registration of children.
16. Attendance and Punctuality 'Key Information' will be provided by the Attendance Team to new Southwark children and will be available in key languages to ensure new starters are aware of the high profile of attendance and punctuality at Southwark.

#### **Rewards:**

17. The school will give a weekly high profile to awards for attendance in weekly merit assemblies on Friday. The school will value good punctuality and attendance by an award to the class with the lowest number of late marks and highest attendance each week for the whole school.
18. The importance of attendance will be discussed through weekly hub and class assemblies.
19. The school will give half-termly certificates to any children achieving 100% attendance which will be presented in an end of each half term.
20. Any children achieving 100% attendance for the year will have the chance to win a large prize (bike/scooter) and be rewarded with a gift bag of prizes. Any children achieving 99% will have a chance to win a smaller prize.
21. At the end of the year, the class with the highest attendance across school will be rewarded with a class cinema trip.
22. Families will be invited to an end of year attendance assembly in which prizes will be awarded including family prizes such as meal out vouchers and family cinema tickets.
23. Key children will be nominated for the Lord Mayor's Attendance Award and will be invited to attend an awards celebration.
24. Each Autumn and Spring term during the Attendance Fortnight (a fortnight identified as having lower attendance across school) children who achieve 100% attendance and most improved with no lates will be rewarded with a prize.

#### **Late Arrivals:**

25. The Attendance Support Officer will support the Attendance Officer in ascertaining reasons for late arrivals in the morning. Parents must enter school via the main entrance and complete a late slip and sign it.
26. Where a child is late 5 times or more in four weeks, the Attendance Officer will send a letter on the Head of School's behalf that warns the parent/carer future late arrivals may not be authorised and can result in a fixed penalty fine being issued.
27. Support will be given to families (i.e. home visits/review meetings) as far as possible within the resources available to the school but children will not be directly collected from home by staff members other than in extremely unusual circumstances on a "one off" basis.
28. Children who have 5 or more lates within a half term will be given a punctuality chart to monitor their punctuality and earn them a reward if they achieve a week on time every day. They will be taken off the chart once their lateness falls below 5 or more in a half term and rewarded with a certificate.

### **Other approaches:**

29. Attendance figures, expressed as a percentage, will be included on the annual report of every child a flow chart indicating a pupil's attendance is also included. Where there has been an attendance problem, the Head of School and class teacher will draw attention to it in his/her comments.
30. The Attendance Officer will prepare attendance figures for submission to the Local Authority and the Department for Education.
31. The Head of School will present figures on attendance to the Governing Body every term in the Head of School's report. An analysis of attendance prepared and completed by the Attendance Officer will be presented to governors annually at the Summer term meeting,
32. The school's Learning Mentor has undertaken training in the Webster Stratton Programme in order to support families who have difficulties at home that affect their attendance and punctuality.
33. Children will have the opportunity to work with their class teacher and Health Mentor on a 1:1 basis to improve their attendance/punctuality through assertive mentoring and the Green Team.
34. The school will run the 'Southwark University' for Year 6 pupils who have the opportunity to 'graduate' with a score that is proportionate to their attendance level.
35. Southwark Primary School have adopted the Local Authority Common Attendance Protocol.
36. The attendance and punctuality FROG page along with notice boards throughout school and 'class dojo's' will be used to celebrate achievements and communicate important information to parents and children at home.

### **Leave of Absence in Term Time**

The school will, as far as possible, attempt to schedule training days in such a way that parents are able to book a slightly cheaper holiday without their child missing school. Leave of absence will only be authorised, if there are exceptional circumstances.

Parent/carers must follow school procedures when requesting leave of absence for their child.

- Requests should be made at least four weeks in advance of the proposed absence.
- A letter should be addressed to the Attendance Officer explaining why the leave is essential and the reasons why it needs to take place during term time.
- Written Travel documentation, confirming the place where they are staying and the flight details must be supplied before a request can be considered.

**If an unauthorised leave of absence is taken in term time a fixed penalty notice will be instigated unless there are considerable mitigating circumstances.**

### **Sickness**

The school will follow the guidelines from the *Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings* document from the Public Health sector. The guidelines have been distributed to all staff and will be **reviewed on an ongoing basis**.

**Conclusion:** Good attendance and punctuality are essential for the educational attainment and personal confidence of pupils. The school will continually endeavour to ensure that all pupils are able to attend school regularly and on time.