



Behaviour and Attendance Policy

Principles

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by learners will be recognised appropriately. All learners should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

All learners are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the learner. If a learner is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

The attendance and behaviour policy must include procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/learner or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the learner is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a learner of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes:

- **parents keeping children off school unnecessarily**
- **truancy before or during the school day**
- **absences which have never been properly explained**
- **children who arrive at school too late to get a mark**

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage, asking for an appointment with the head teacher or Welfare Officer and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the learner's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.



Alternatively, parents or learners may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

What parents should do if their child is absent:

Absence known in advance (e.g. Medical Appointment)

- Send in a note to the office/teacher informing the school of the nature of the absence (reasons why) and when it will be taken.
 - (a phone call to Mrs Cowie (Bursar) or Mrs Vernon
 - (Clerical Assistant) in the school office, can also be made- this information will then be recorded on the absence record sheet)

Absence not known in advance

- Ring the school (*before 10.00am where possible*) on the first day of absence in order to inform the school and provide a reason.
- If unable to ring – send a note into school as soon as possible (*the day of return*) detailing the nature of the absence.

Lateness

At Silverdale we actively encourage all learners to arrive at school on time and try to work in partnership with parents to ensure this. If a parent/carer is aware that they are going to be late and have a valid reason then we ask that they follow the procedure below:

- Ring the school (as soon as possible) so that class teachers can be informed and prepare for the late arrival of the child.
- Parents and learners who arrive late should come to the school office to register and sign in the 'Late Registration' Book providing a reason for lateness.
- Children arriving at school up to 30 minutes after the register was taken will be recorded as **L** for late.
- Children arriving later than this period will be recorded as **U** which legally means they were absent.

Requests for 'Leave of Absence' from school

Silverdale Primary Academy follows Staffordshire's Local Authority Protocol in relation to requests for 'Leave of Absence' from school during term time. (Copy of the form can be obtained at the school office)

- Requests for leave of absence from school must be made.
- Parent/carer should complete a request form (which can be collected from the school office) and submit at least 2 weeks prior to the attended period of absence.
- Pupils will be marked in the register as **G** for the period of leave as absences cannot be authorised by the school.

Parents will be made aware via the school website, letters and the notice board that leave of absence cannot be authorised and will lead to the pupil being marked with unauthorised absences and that this may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or other action.



When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the EWO will be made by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444. **(For information see Appendix A)**

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

School targets, initiatives and projects

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

Attendance Analysis

The school office and Leadership team termly review and analyse attendance data to identify trends for individuals, groups and classes in order to target school improvement in this area. Wherever possible, action will be taken by the school to improve a learner's attendance and investigate and address any underlying causes or problems before considering whether to make a referral to the Local authority.

Once every half term the Clerical Assistant liaises with the EWO to discuss any attendance concerns and also report any child who's attendance falls below 85%.

Attendance Initiatives

At Silverdale Primary we believe that attendance is an important factor in the success of a learner's education. In order to ensure consistency and progression in their learning development it is vital that learners not only attend on a daily basis but also arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important however, that learners should not be in school if they are unwell and unable to cope with the daily learning.

The school has adopted the following attendance initiatives in order to help us ensure a continuity of learning experience for our learners and to further improve our attendance targets.

Communication

Key information regarding lateness, illness and absence is given to parents through the website and provided through letters. This highlights the importance of being at school on time and notifying the school if their child is absent for any reason. Parents are encouraged to share any worries their child might have in school and to work in partnership with the school to address any issues or concerns.

Attendance Celebration Letters

Each learner's individual attendance is tracked on a termly basis. Parents receive a letter indicating their child's attendance for the half term and how this compares to the school's own attendance target. Colour coded boxes visually highlight where their child's attendance falls within an agreed scale. **(For a copy of the letters see Appendix B)**

Attendance colour codes:

- 96% - 100% (Well done! This is excellent)
- 92% - 95% (Be Careful)
- 85% - 91% (Improvement Needed!)
- Less than 85% (Persistent Absence Pupil)



Class Attendance Celebration

Once a week the attendance records of each class are celebrated during a celebration assembly. The class with the best attendance gets awarded an Attendance Cup.

Concerns

Absence/Lateness

If a learner is identified as regularly late for school or is often absent then:

- The clerical assistant will contact the parent concerned in order to have an informal discussion;
- If the concerns persist then the clerical assistant will inform the Headteacher who will then make arrangements to meet with the parents/carers to discuss any issues, difficulties or concerns;
- If the attendance problems persist then the school will inform the Educational Welfare Officer completing the relevant paperwork showing patterns of absence and lateness;
- The EWO will then visit the family concerned to explore issues further.

Poor Attendance

If a child's attendance continues to cause concern or falls below 85% then parents receive a special letter indicating the school's concerns and inviting them into school to meet with the Education Welfare Officer. Support mechanisms are then discussed to promote better attendance and work in partnership with the families concerned.

Truancy

All staff at Silverdale Primary Academy are concerned about learner's regular attendance and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. They also strive to ensure that every learner's safety, welfare and happiness is at the heart of all decision making. Although it is a very rare occurrence for a learner to truant, if there is a concern that a learner might be truanting then the following action is taken immediately:

- Notify the Headteacher;
- Headteacher then contacts the parents either by phone or by home visit if possible;
- This is then followed up by notifying the Educational welfare Officer of the situation;
- The Headteacher, Parents and learner concerned meet to discuss any reasons for the learner not wanting to attend school in an effort to resolve any issues and put relevant support into place;
- Actions decided are shared with all relevant personnel and put into place.

First Day of Absence Contact

If a child is absent without explanation then the following procedures will be followed:

- If by 10.00am we have not received an explanation for absence – Mrs Vernon (Clerical Assistant) in the school office will contact the parents by phone and by text message;
- This will enable us to ensure that the parent was aware of their child's absence from school enabling the parent where necessary to establish their child is safe;
- This will also determine the reason for absence and when the child might be expected to return to school;
- The clerical Assistant will then enter the correct code into the school register and relay any messages to the appropriate members of staff.



Targets

The following indicates the targets agreed by the LA and school for the academic year.

- **School absence target for 2013-2014 = 4%**
- **School attendance target for 2013-2014 = 96%**

Each term, attendance certificates will be given to children who achieve the school target for attendance or have 100% attendance throughout the term.

Responsible Contacts

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mrs L Nejrup – Headteacher

Mrs D Vernon – Clerical Assistant

All staff have a shared responsibility in encouraging good attendance. They follow the school's positive behaviour management and Anti-bullying policies and practice in order to ensure that learners feel safe, cared for and positive about their experience of school.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.



Appendix A

The department of education have amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, with regard to Headteachers being able to grant leave of absence for family holidays for up to ten days.

From September 2013 the amendments remove references to family holidays as well as the statutory threshold of ten days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may NOT grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case the headteacher will determine the number of days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. If parents proceed to take the pupil out of school for a family holiday, all of the absences during this period will now be recorded as 'unauthorised'. This will affect your child's attendance record. Where a pupil has irregular attendance and the absences are unauthorised, the parents are committing an offence and could be issued with a Penalty Notice or prosecuted in accordance with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

Appendix B

96% - 100% (Well done! This is excellent)

Dear Parent of

We are writing to congratulate you and your child. Since September 2013 your child's percentage attendance percentage is %. This is excellent! Such good attendance is ensuring that your child is missing as little teaching and learning as possible.

If you are in the green group you have been absent for less than two weeks or attended school every day.

Thank you for your continuing support,

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Nejrup
Headteacher

92% - 95% (Be Careful)

Dear Parent of

Since September 2013, your child's attendance percentage is %. This is very good and we recommend that your child is not absent unnecessarily for the rest of the year so that they may achieve an attendance percentage of over 95%.

All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Nejrup
Headteacher



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85% - 91% (Improvement Needed!)

Dear Parent of

Since September 2013, your child's attendance percentage is %.

This is unacceptable and needs your urgent attention as this does not reach the required national expectation of 96%

Evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

Your child is currently in the grey group which means that it is very important your child's attendance improves. Please ensure that your child is not absent unnecessarily. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all children should be in the yellow and green groups.

Thank you for your continuing support,

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Nejrup
Headteacher

Less than 85% (Persistent Absence Pupil)

Dear Parent of

Since September 2013, your child's attendance percentage is %.

This is unacceptable and needs your urgent attention as this does not reach the required national expectation of 96%

Evidence shows that attendance does affect a child's learning and attainment. All children should have an attendance percentage that allows them to be in the green or yellow groups.

Your child is currently in the red group and is now categorised as a "Persistent Absence Pupil" by the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Officer monitors each child's attendance on a regular basis and you could face court proceedings. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, all children should be in the yellow and green groups.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Nejrup
Headteacher





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Document Change Log

Version No.	Date of review	Reviewer	Changes Made
2	16.09.13	L Nejrup	Update in line with LA guidance
3	January 2014	Lindi Nejrup	Udate branding and Appendices