



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Suffah Primary School

Spring 2 2020

Review Date: Spring 2 2022

Introduction

Suffah Primary School aims to maximise attendance rates in order to ensure that all pupils are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them.

The school values all pupils, and staff will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. However, the school will challenge pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives the school has established an effective system of communication with parents to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Suffah Primary School's attendance and punctuality should not be below 96%.

Legal Framework

When a pupil of compulsory school age is on the school's register, parents are required by law to ensure that their children attend school regularly and that they arrive on time. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. It is important that children from an early age get into good habits of regular and punctual attendance that set positive patterns for the future.

Absence from school should only occur when a child is unfit to attend due to illness; has a day of religious observance or leave of absence has been granted by the school.

Support Systems

It is recognised that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home, in the community or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

The school works closely with Hounslow's Education Welfare service in matters relating to poor school attendance and continuing late arrival at school. Other support services are requested to provide assistance on a need led basis.

Arrival and Registration

Registration takes place twice per day, at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Morning registration takes place between 7.45am–7.50am. If a child arrives after the end of the registration period, they will be marked as late (Code L). If a child arrives after 8.15am they will be marked as *Unauthorised Absence (Code U)*. Afternoon registration begins at 1.15pm and ends at 1.20pm after which a pupil will be marked late (Code L) in the register. Children arriving after 1.45pm will be marked as *Unauthorised Absence (Code U)*

During Ramadhan the school timings may be different, but the same principle applies. Please note that the registration takes place in the classroom not the car park! It can take a pupil up to 3 minutes to get to his/her classroom once they arrive into the school building.

Nursery Registration

Nursery aged children who are registered with Suffah will be expected to attend on their chosen days. Registration will be taken, and parents will be asked if their attendance is below expected. What parents don't seem to realise is that if their child has missed phonics lesson they will be behind in their learning higher up in the Primary School and will need intervention etc. Nursery parents will not be fined for their absences but will be asked about their poor attendance and punctuality.

Lates and Absences

When Primary children arrive in school late, or if they have to leave school early, **the parent or carer MUST come up to the school office to sign them in or out.** The signing in/out register is used as an appendix to the class register as part of the school's Health & Safety and Fire and Safety procedures. Nursery and Reception children need to be brought to and collected from the EY's building.

Fines

Attendance: For **each session** a child has an unauthorized absence (even if it is the first) there will be a fine of **£20** that must be paid within 14 days. Any delays or nonpayment may result in further action being taken by the school.

Punctuality: This must not fall below **96%**. As there are 280 registration sessions (2 per day) a child cannot be late for more than 11 sessions in a year. For **each session** a child is late below **95%** (14 sessions), there will be a fine of **£5** that must be paid within 14 days. Any delays or nonpayment may result in further action being taken by the school.

Suffah Primary School must ensure maximum attendance and punctuality with an absolute minimum of 96% for each!

Categorising Absence

When a pupil is absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the school and **cannot be authorised by parents**. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.

Illness (Code I): This code will be used where a child is absent for the whole session. The school office should be informed before 7:50am on the first day of a child's absence due to illness with an expected date of return. Parents should keep in regular contact with the school if the absence continues. Children should return to school as soon as they are well enough to attend. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness.

This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, GP's note, etc.

Medical Appointments (Code M): This code will be used where a child is absent for the whole session. Parents should make routine medical and dental appointments outside of the school day so as not to disrupt their child's education. If it is absolutely necessary to make an appointment during school time (e.g. a specialist medical or dental appointment), pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to the school office.

Religious Observance (Code R): The school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends. The school will authorise absence on parental request for a day's absence for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

Other Authorised Circumstances (Code C): The school will consider authorising absence on occasions where there is absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example a family bereavement.

Unauthorised Absence: Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school. Unsatisfactory explanations include: shopping for uniforms; a pupil's or family members birthday; unauthorised holidays; going to see grandparents abroad; closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes; "couldn't get up"; illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school; having their hair cut; looking after the house or a sick member of the family. This is a general list and is not exhaustive.

Lateness: Late absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Exclusion from school (Code E): Exclusion is counted as an authorised absence.

Leave of Absence: The school strongly discourages leave of absence during school time. Parents **do not** have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time due to leave of absence. Under no circumstances will the school approve a holiday during school time.

- The Government regulation (September 2013) regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Head Teacher **will not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless he/she considers** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time.
- Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- The Head Teacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing.

Roles and Responsibilities

Suffah Primary School believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The **Governing Body**, in order to ensure that the school is complying with its statutory duties, will:

- Name a governor for attendance; **Amna Kleniewska**.
- Ensure that there is a named senior member of staff to lead on attendance; Amina Abderrahman.
- Review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Review attendance on a termly basis and hold a shared responsibility to report pupil attendance to the Chair of Governors, Mr Afzaal Kiani.
- Support (where appropriate) meetings in school with parents relating to attendance concerns (**Amna Kleniewska**).
- Have attendance as an on-going agenda item at Governors' meetings.

The School will:

- Set an Attendance target and Persistent Absence target and share with staff, governors and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Encourage a welcoming and positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and their presence is valued;
- Ensure the structure of attendance monitoring is effective with clear trigger points for attendance and punctuality letters (below 96% and 90%).
- Maintain clear procedures for monitoring Persistent Absentees and late comers.
- Make immediate contact with parents if there is concern about an absent pupil;
- Collect and analyse attendance and punctuality data, on fortnightly basis, in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement, and support and inform policy/practice
- Issue letters to parents of pupils who are regularly late for school or are consistently poor attendees expressing concern;
- Invite parents into school, if there is no improvement in attendance following a letter, to discuss the situation with the Attendance Lead/headteacher;
- Reward pupils' successes in achieving 100% attendance (termly and annually);
- Set targets for improvement for pupils whose attendance is cause for concern. The head teacher will monitor and review these targets
- Remind parents regularly (via newsletters, the school website, school prospectus, Parent consultations, annual report to parents etc.) of the importance of good attendance.
- Review Attendance and Punctuality Policy to ensure relevant attendance information is included

- Make a termly report to the school's governing body, by the Head Teacher, on attendance matters. In addition, it is recommended that the head teacher reports on attendance, alongside the named governor, to the governors on a termly basis.
- Liaise with other agencies – when this may serve to support and assist pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Refer pupils to the Education Welfare Service when attendance falls below 90%.

Parents have a very important part to play in supporting their children's education. Ultimately all those with parental responsibility are accountable for the regular and punctual attendance of children. In order to make a valuable contribution to their attendance parents are expected to: -

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress;
- See themselves as partners with schools in the education of their children and must endeavour to instil respect for education and those who deliver it;
- Contact the school by 7.50am on the first day of absence to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Parents should keep in regular contact with the school if the absence continues. Children should return to school as soon as they are well enough to attend;
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Make routine appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours or during school holidays;
- Contact the headteacher should their child seem worried or upset about coming to school;
- Encourage good routines at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before;
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family;
- Ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed, and in a condition to learn;
- Ensure the school are kept informed of the progress during continued absence at regular intervals;
- Avoid taking their children on holiday during school time. If occasion arises where this is felt to be unavoidable, honest communication should take place with school and the leave requested in advance.

School Expectations of Pupils:

- Children should try their best to attend school regularly and punctually;
- Primary pupils arriving after 7.50am **must be accompanied by the parent and should always report to the school office.**

☐ Please note that Ramadhan times may be different