

SHEPPEY VALLEY SLP

Attendance Policy

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Part 1: Sheppey Valley SLP schools – common policy

1. Aims of this policy

This policy aims to:

- a. support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- b. ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer to increase learning;
- c. enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity during their time in Sheppey Valley Schools;
- d. make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities across all key stages;
- e. ensure consistency across the member schools in the Sheppey Valley SLP
- f. ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

2. The importance of being at school

- a. Regular attendance at school is the key to every child achieving his or her maximum potential.
- b. The task of raising and promoting attendance is a joint one. By co-operating and communicating we believe that parents/carers, children, schools and agencies can raise achievement by raising attendance.

3. Expectations

3.1 Sheppey Valley Schools SLP expects that children:

- a. attend school every day
- b. attend school punctually
- c. attend appropriately prepared for the day
- d. discuss promptly with their class teacher, tutor or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance

3.2 Sheppey Valley Schools SLP expects that parents and carers will:

- a. ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- b. ensure that they contact the school daily of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school

3.3 Sheppey Valley SLP Schools' responsibilities

- a. to follow the Local Authority guidelines to address attendance;
- b. administer this policy fairly;
- c. encourage good attendance and investigate all absenteeism;
- d. set a good example to children about attendance and punctuality;
- e. work closely and supportively with parents/carers should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern;
- f. make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly;
- g. liaise with other schools with siblings of non-attending children on roll;
- h. refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Attendance Service. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Education Attendance Service may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order;
- i. will notify the Local Authority (LA) after 15 days sickness;
- j. will notify Education Attendance Officer after five days (10 sessions) unexplained absence within a twelve week period;
- k. make sure parents are given school term dates and notification of In-service days, in writing and as far in advance as possible;
- l. keep parents and carers informed about attendance levels through normal school channels of communications;
- m. inform governors about the effectiveness of measures taken to improve attendance.

4.0 Government Regulations & legal obligations

Government's amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came into force on 1st September 2013. These changes require Head Teachers to make a direct referral to Somerset County Council for penalty notices to be issued to the parents and carers of non-attending children.

4.1 Application for term time leave

In line with the Government's amendments to the regulations, term time holidays during term time will NOT be authorised.

Only in exceptional circumstances may permission be granted for a maximum of five days leave of absence in term time in which case an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Head Teacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date (unless for short notice instances such as funerals).

Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.

If the leave is **not** authorised and the child is still taken out of school for a period of at least **five** consecutive days the Head Teacher will follow the DfE guidance and refer the parents for a penalty notice.

To ensure that Head Teachers are able to implement the administering of penalty notices fairly, the parent of any child absent from school for five or more consecutive days will be required to provide evidence of the child's illness (doctor's note or completed surgery appointment card).

If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the Education Attendance Service will be notified. This could result in a penalty notice being issued.

Examples of authorised absences:

- genuine illness of the pupil;
- hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil; although we ask where possible these take place outside school hours
- major religious observances
- visits to prospective new schools
- external exams or educational assessments.

Examples of unauthorised absences:

- shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park;
- a birthday treat;
- oversleeping due to a late night;
- looking after other children / other family member;
- appointments for other family members.
- holidays for which there are no exceptional circumstances

Note: Head Teachers will require evidence of medical appointments etc in the form of appointment cards and letters from Doctors

4.2 Failure to ensure attendance

Sheppey Valley Schools follow the Local Authority guidelines to address attendance which may include the use of statutory powers which include the use of penalty notices and court prosecution.

If there is no improvement in school attendance schools will refer to the Education Attendance Officer who works in partnership with school and parents in support of pupils who are failing to attend school on a regular basis.

The Education Attendance Service may issue a Penalty Notice to parents / carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are

not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school.

4.3 Unauthorised absence & Penalty notices

In the instance of unauthorised absence, Head Teachers can make an immediate referral for a penalty notice to be issued when the absence has totalled five days (10 sessions). They do not have to be consecutive if in a period of the last 12 school weeks.

4.4 Right of appeal

There is no formal process for appeal and no right of appeal against penalty notices.

Part 2: Arrangements to promote good attendance at St Paul's CofE Vc Junior School School

St Paul's CofE VC Junior School is committed to promoting regular attendance at school for all of the pupils. The school will comply with every aspect of the SLP Attendance policy.

Further action to be taken to promote good attendance from pupils will include;

- Stating clearly in the school prospectus the expectations that the school has in relation to regular and good attendance
- Stating in the school prospectus that good attendance is expected of children in the Foundation Stage who haven't reached their fifth birthday and their attendance will be treated in the same manner as 5+year olds.
- Sending home a 'Home School Agreement' at the beginning of Year 3 that states clearly the expectations of the school in relation to attendance.
- Half termly rewards for pupils who achieve 100% attendance. This will ensure when children may have low attendance in one half-term they may succeed with 100% attendance in other half terms. This is preferable to just rewarding those who have 100% over the whole year.
- Half termly letters home to parents informing them of their child's attendance percentage.
- Organising meetings to discuss low attendance with parents to try and deal with issues quickly and effectively.
- Gaining the support of the Education Attendance Officer if internal school action and support has not brought about an acceptable improvement to a child's attendance.
- Support from PFSA.