

Attendance - Frequently asked questions:

Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

(PLEASE REFER TO THE FULL ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR ALL INFORMATION)

How do I report my child absent?

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone or email before 8:45am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Why is the school contacting me about an absence?

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

What do I do if my child is ill?

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

Who do I contact about attendance?

The school's attendance officers are Lucy Whiffin, Caroline Keightley and Keely Pugh, and can be contacted via office@southbourneinfants.co.uk. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officers for queries or concerns about attendance.

What to do if my child is absent from school more than 5 days?

Where a pupil is absent for more than five school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a written explanation for the absence(s).

How do I request a leave of absence from school?

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances**. Complete the 'Request for Absence form', at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Will the school grant my child time off for a family holiday?

The school is extremely unlikely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- Where a pupil's unauthorised absence record is already above **10 percent**

Will I receive a penalty notice (fine)?

Taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. When a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised absence in a 10 school week period; a school day is two sessions AM and PM.

Unauthorised absence:

- The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken is recorded as an unauthorised absence
- A holiday in term time recorded as unauthorised.

What do I do if my child has a medical appointment?

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

What is absence?

Arrival at school after the register has closed. Not attending school for any reason.

What is persistent absence?

Missing more than 10 percent of schooling across the year for any reason.

What time are children expected to start school at Southbourne Infant School?

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day, they are required to be at school for the full day. The school day starts at **8:45am**.

What is a late mark?

The morning register will be taken at **8.45am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

Why has my child got a mark of absence when they arrived at school after 9.15am?

The morning register closes at 9:15am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.