

Salway Ash School

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Good attendance means that children usually make good, consistent progress in their school work. We are proud of our children's achievements and feel this is an indication that our pupils enjoy being in school.

Salway Ash School expects good attendance from its pupils, in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer. We rely on our partnership with parents to ensure that this is achieved.

The school day

Registration

Our school day starts at 8.55am.

Pupils who are not present for registration but arrive before 9.25 am will be marked as present but late. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a medical appointment which will force them to be late please ensure you inform the school in good time.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS / CARERS

- Parents have a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school every day (100% of sessions attended) , punctually, properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- Dorset County Council has statutory powers to bring legal action against parents/carers who:
 - Fail to ensure regular attendance at school of a registered pupil
 - Fail to ensure their child is receiving a suitable education - either by regular attendance at school or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them.
 - The local authority has a duty under Section 437 of the Education Act 1996 to serve a notice or a school attendance order to the parent/carer.
- If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents must notify the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- A pupil's absence from school will be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received.
- Attendance issues will be raised with parents through Parents' Evenings, Governors, school prospectus, newsletter, and/or letter prior to commencing school. Termly attendance will be sent to parents if percentage of attendance drops below trigger points.
- Attendance is recorded on end of year reports and passed on to the appropriate secondary school.
- Parents will be promptly informed of concerns about attendance and given the opportunity to discuss this with a member of staff.
- Parents can check their child's percentage of attendance at all times on the parent portal.
- Attendance will be discussed with individual pupils if there is a level of concern or pattern of absence and with parents if necessary.
- Pupils who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support, initially from class teacher, and should the need arise, from a senior member of staff.
- All families will inevitably go through periods when life can be very challenging. This could be to do with a family bereavement, redundancy and debt, children's challenging behaviour etc. In these circumstances it is important that you talk to staff in confidence as to how this might be affecting your child's ability to focus at school, their behaviour and attendance. It may also be that a Common Assessment might be a supportive way forward. A Common Assessment is a way

of gathering information and appropriate agencies together to see what kind of support is needed. This is something that happens with you and can only be done with your consent. Further information on the CAF process and related leaflets are available on www.dorsetforyou.com/caf

- Children and young people who are unable to attend school because of medical needs have access to as much education as their medical condition allows so that they are able to maintain the momentum of their education and to keep up with their studies. Below is a link to further guidance: [Access to Education for Children and Young People with Medical Needs](#)

Authorised and unauthorised absence

It is recognised that there are occasions when child/ren are withdrawn from school for exceptional circumstances.

The nature of the words 'exceptional circumstances' are such that they indicate unusual events or an abnormal occurrence. It is therefore not possible to define in advance when a request will or will not be exceptional.

The Governing Body assesses requests for leave of absence on a case by case basis before a decision is made.

Authorised absence where exceptional circumstances may apply:

Sickness

Medical or dental appointments which, cannot be arranged outside school hours

Immediate family exceptional event.

Days of religious observance

Unauthorised absence is:

Holidays within term times.

Truancy

Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives

Going shopping or having hair cut

Any absence which the school has not been informed about in advance, either by letter or telephone

The school will be legally obliged to record these absences as "unauthorised".

Unauthorised Absence

1. If a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences (half day sessions) within a 12 school week period then a Penalty Notice can be considered.
2. The Local Authority School Attendance Team will send a warning letter to the parent(s) stating that the pupil must have no unauthorised absence in the next 15 school days. If there is any unauthorised absence, a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Holidays in Term Time (Unauthorised leave of absence)

A Penalty Notice can be issued when a parent takes a child on holiday during term time without the school authorising the absence.

1. A minimum of 10 half day sessions of unauthorised absence will still apply before the Penalty Notice can be issued, however a warning letter will not be sent.
2. If there is a longer unauthorised holiday period or 10 unauthorised holiday absences and additional unauthorised absences on the pupil's record then a Penalty Notice will be issued.
- 3.

The law requires that all schools must show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. From September 2013 Head Teachers do not have the authority to grant leave of absence for holidays.

If parents disregard these regulations they will be breaking the law and could face paying a Penalty Notice.

Procedure for issuing Penalty Notices:

The School Attendance Service (as part of Children's Services) will issue Penalty Notices for all Dorset Schools. Penalty Notices will only be issued by first class post and never as an on the spot action;

- Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days is £60 per parent per child and payment after this time but within 28 days is £120. Payment by instalment is not accepted.

PUPILS

- Pupils will be made aware of the importance of maintaining their attendance at the highest possible level. This will be encouraged through positive strategies and rewards: Certificates celebrating good levels of attendance are presented at the end of each year. Pupils are praised when punctuality has been improved.
- It is made clear to pupils that they are expected to attend school regularly (100% attendance) and punctually and the reasons why this is important.
- If pupils are unhappy about any aspect of school or home life they are actively encouraged to talk to a member of staff they feel comfortable with.

GOVERNORS

- Attendance will be an agenda item at the first Governors' meeting of each term.
- The Governors school improvement committee will be responsible for following up issues raised with the head teacher on attendance matters.
- The governing body will ratify the school's policy.

School admission and attendance registers must be available for inspection during School hours by any:-

- of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools ~
- additional inspector (assisting the Chief Inspector)
- officer of the local (education) authority authorised for that purpose

Actions to be taken for pupils who are identified as persistent absentees_

- Termly attendance data will be analysed and letters will be sent home when attendance falls below agreed pyramid trigger points. - 95%, 90%, 85%, 80% or below.
- At each point of contact discussions will take place with parents to ascertain whether help

is needed and if so an action plan put in to place.

DATA ANALYSIS

- Attendance will be centrally monitored for all pupils using class registers and computer software.
- Potential attendance patterns will be regularly analysed to explore reasons and required actions.
- Sibling attendance at other schools will be taken into consideration when dealing with attendance issues and liaising with families.
- The school is aware that consultation with families around ethnicity, religion or beliefs may be required to ascertain the effects on school attendance on certain days and festivities.

Relevant legislation and guidance

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 September 2013.

