

Seven Mills Policy



Attendance Policy June 2021

Headteacher's Signature:

Chair of Governor's Signature:

Date:

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Aims

- Support pupils and their parent/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- Make parent/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure attendance meets government and local authority targets.

Safeguarding

Absence from school is recognised as a Safeguarding issue as it places children at risk. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses: Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying. In cases where failing to attend school on a regular basis has been identified as a safeguarding matter, the school's child protection policy and procedures will be applied.

Being at School

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/Carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that their children arrive at school on time and return home safely.

Seven Mills Primary School aims to provide the highest standards of education in a safe, inclusive environment through effective learning and teaching for all, with a broad, balanced, creative and relevant curriculum that includes all statutory requirements. We value equality and inclusion and believe in supporting all learners to become confident individuals, able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives. Consequently, we expect them to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society and who deal effectively with economic, social and cultural change.

Expectations

The school is aiming to achieve an attendance target of 96%.

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or the school office staff any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities

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- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Contact the school daily, on the day of the absence or if the absence is known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school; giving the reason and the expected time they will be away from school on their first day of absence
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their children
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality; monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Follow up all the unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition
- Regularly inform parents of the attendance percentage of all pupils
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly
- Meet regularly with the Attendance Welfare Advisor (AWA) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance Behaviour and Attendance Support Service (BASS). Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by BASS may result in further actions e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.

Governors

It is the Governors' legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their school. The school attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis through the committees.

Register Procedures

Punctuality is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils the main playground is supervised from 08:40 and the children line up at 08:50 to start school.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil
- Registration takes place at the beginning of the day for each class and pupils who arrive late but before the closure of the registers will be recorded as late in the register
- Registers close ten minutes after each class' day begins

- First day calling will commence at 09:10
- Afternoon registration is taken at the beginning of each class' afternoon session
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with through the admin and leadership teams, and maybe referred to the AWA
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary
- All attendance records are documented using RM Integris software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

Lateness

At 08:50 the bell is rung and all children will line up and go into school. At 08:55 the gate will be closed by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher and/or attendance office. All children arriving between 08:55 and 09:05 will receive a late card and will report to the school office. A member of the admin team will mark the pupil late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L). After 09:05, the only way to get into school is via the school office. Pupils will also be marked as late in the attendance record and parents will be asked why they are late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late.

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve. Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

Lateness Strategy of Intervention

The school's attendance team will meet at the end of a half term and will look at the punctuality of all pupils.

If a pupil has between 3 and 5 lates in a term (STAGE ONE)

- Verbal conversation with parents regarding lateness which will be monitored

If a pupil has between 6 and 10 lates in a term (STAGE TWO)

- A Warning Letter will be sent home raising the concern as to the child's lateness and the impact this has on their learning.

If a pupil has more than 10 lates in a term (STAGE THREE)

- Parents will be invited into school to a meeting together with the Headteacher or Deputy and school attendance officer.
- Targets will be set
- Punctuality will then be monitored over a four-week period.

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence. All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on the computer. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised. Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence then we send a letter requesting these details to parents/carers to complete. If this letter is not completed and returned by the specified date then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O)

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. The Attendance Officer checks all of the registers from 09:10 to 09:30 on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Repeated Illness

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription.

Medical Conditions

When children have a medical condition that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Missing Children

In the event of a child not attending, the school will make all efforts to contact the family. Reasonable steps to be taken by school staff include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts (parents are asked to provide a minimum of two emergency contacts in the event of children not arriving at school without prior notification and also for other emergency purposes).
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- On day 3 we would conduct possible home visits
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family

Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to Tower Hamlets Children Missing Education officer.

All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on CPOMs.

Pupil Leaving During the School Day

During school hours, school staff are legally in 'loco parentis' and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school. Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return by an adult. Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission, their parents will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the police and register the pupil as a missing person.

Leave of Absence

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence will not be authorised during such periods except in exceptional circumstances. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but they may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix I), holidays during term time will not usually be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- In exceptional circumstances permission may be granted
- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 2 weeks prior to the requested date where possible. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance with a check that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified.

Penalty Notice

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued when a pupil is stopped by Truancy Patrol or if a parent/carers fails to ensure regular school attendance.

Penalty Notices for Holidays

In line with the amendments made to the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- The Headteacher can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when pupils are taken out of school for holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation.

- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days
- Penalty notices are issued to each parent, for each child.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school, that they inform Seven Mills School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the AWA.

Patterns of Absence

First Day of Absence

If a child is absent from school, the parent/carers should contact the school on 0207 987 2350 before 09:00. If a parent/carers does not inform the school, a member of the Admin Staff will ring the numbers on the pupil's contact list to ascertain why the child is absent.

The school is aiming to achieve an attendance target of 96%.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 92% there is a clear strategy of intervention in place.

Attendance Percentages are worked out as following:

99% - 100%	Excellent
97% - 98%	Very Good
96%	Good
94% - 95.99%	Developing - GREEN STAGE
92% - 93.99%	Poor - AMBER STAGE
90% - 91.99%	Unacceptable - RED STAGE
Below 90%	AWA Involvement

Strategy of Intervention

The school's attendance team will meet once every two weeks and will look at the attendance of all pupils.

If a pupil's attendance is between 94 and 95.99% (GREEN STAGE)

- Teacher's to speak to parents at parent's meetings to inform them of attendance concerns

If a pupil's attendance is between 92% and 93.99% (AMBER STAGE)

- A Warning Letter will be sent home raising the concern as to the child's attendance dipping.

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If a pupil's attendance is between 90% and 91.99% (RED STAGE)

- Parents will be invited into school to an Attendance Panel (SAP) Meeting together with the Headteacher or Deputy and school attendance officer.
- Targets will be set to monitor attendance
- Attendance will then be monitored over a four-week period. An Attendance and Punctuality Card will be sent home on a weekly basis.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% (Emergency STAGE)

- Parents will be invited into school to an Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting together with the Attendance Welfare Advisor (AWA) Headteacher or Deputy and school attendance officer.
- An Action plan will be set up
- A School Attendance contract and support plan will be incorporated. This contract will be signed by the school and by parent/carers
- Attendance will then be monitored over a four-week period. An Attendance and Punctuality Card will be sent home on a weekly basis.
- If after monitoring no improvement outside agencies may be involved and the matter will be directed to Tower Hamlets if attendance continues to fall and no improvement is made.

The Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team are available to parents/carers at the school entrance at the beginning and end of the day and are able to answer any queries about attendance.

Parents are expected to complete a Special Leave request form if wanting to take their children out of school for any reason during Term Time. The Headteacher will meet with them to discuss options and consequences. Their attendance level will be taken into consideration.

Attendance and Punctuality have a high profile in school. The Headteacher talks about attendance and punctuality in Assembly and the Class Teacher encourages good attendance and punctuality during PSHE.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are expected to attend school regularly. However, there are circumstances where children may be offered an adjusted timetable in order to support their individual needs. Such circumstances might include:

- Welcoming a new pupil with additional needs into our Nursery
- Transition of a new pupil with additional needs into Seven Mills
- Re-integration of a pupil who has been on a temporary placement at an alternative setting
- Recovery from a medical procedure
- A child struggling to manage the beginning or end of the school day
- Serious, long-term or terminal illness
- Personal transport arrangements
- Parental caring responsibilities

All timetable adjustments for children with SEND must be agreed with the SENCO or Headteacher, and will have an agreed start and review date.

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Where a parent or carer is experiencing difficulties transporting their child to and from school, the SENCO will meet with parents to discuss how the school might support regular attendance and punctuality. Support may include:

- Support from the school's wellbeing team through the ELSA and Drawing and Talking programmes
- Members of staff collecting and/ or dropping off children
- Referrals to Tower Hamlets Children's Commissioning service

The SENCO will keep records of attendance for all children with SEND, including those with EHCPs, which will be reviewed half-termly.

Appendix One

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Appendix Two

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

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S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day