




Southville Primary School

Attendance Policy - Summary

Policy written by:	Bristol City Council	
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Signed: (Headteacher)		Date: 29.9.24
Signed: (Chair of Governors)		Date: 29.9.24

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1. Introduction

It is the aim of Southville Primary School that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. Our Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils and is an integral part of our school.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance we will work together with them, their parents and partner organisations to remove barriers, by building strong and trusting relationships. Therefore, improving attendance is everyone's business.

This policy is a summary of the main procedural information contained in our Attendance Policy, which is based upon Bristol City Council Model Attendance Policy for Schools - Summer 2024 (V8). For legal references and supporting information please refer to the full policy.

2. Key Contacts

Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance:	Attendance Champion; Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance:	Contact point regarding attendance concerns and support:
Andy Bowman	Gareth Potter	Paula Mathias
Headteacher	Deputy Headteacher	Family Liaison Worker
01173534444	01173772671	Paula.mathias@bristol-schools.uk
To report an absence: Merrywood Office: 01173772671 merrywood.southvillep@bristol-schools.uk		Myrtle Office: 01173534444 myrtle.southvillep@bristol-schools.uk

3. Lateness

The Importance of Punctuality

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

If a child is just five minutes late every day, this equates to 3 whole days per year, which is 6 sessions. There is a further breakdown of the impact of lateness on your child's education in Appendix A.

Defining Lateness

Children should be in the school playground by 8.45, with the school day officially starting at 8.50. The morning register is taken between 8.50 and 9.00 and closed at 9.00. After this point, children will need to be registered at the office with a parent/ carer.

A pupil who arrives between 9-9.20 will be marked as present but late.

A pupil who arrives after 9.20 will be marked as present but "Late after registers close" (U) which is an unauthorised absence mark and will be reflected in their overall attendance percentage.

Authorised Lateness

If the pupil is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, or delay with public transport for example, the lateness will be authorised and coded accordingly.

See DfE guidance [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124444/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Responding to Persistent Lateness

The Family Liaison Officer and a member of SLT will meet with parents of those children who are frequently late arriving at school to investigate the reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

4. Requesting and Authorising Absence

The Importance of Excellent Attendance

The table in Appendix B indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of sessions. Our school expectation is 96.4% attendance.

Reporting an absence on the day (eg illness)

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent and should be reported by 9.15am on every day the pupil is absent. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

Requesting an absence in advance

A parent with whom the child normally lives should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least **four weeks** before the absence. **Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing.**

Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see our school's [Safeguarding Policy](#) for more information.)

Leave of Absence

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The school will consider each application individually and will not grant leave of absence unless there are clear exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. This may mean a period of absence is partly authorised and partly unauthorised.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times. Generally, holidays, recreational trips and other periods when a child will not be attending an educational setting will not be authorised.

5. School's Response to Absence

Support for Families

Our Values of Connection and Care underpin our approach to supporting excellent attendance and we use a 'support first approach', as outlined in Appendix 1, to work with families. Our Family Liaison officer Mrs Mathias and Deputy Head (Pastoral) Mr Potter work together to co-ordinate this support so that together we can overcome barriers to excellent attendance.

We will do all we can to encourage our pupils to attend. We will also make available the best provision we can, for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.

Please see DfE guidance documents '[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015](#)', '[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013](#)' and '[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

When are letters received for low attendance?

All parents are updated with their child's attendance percentage every term. If attendance is <95% the following steps are taken:

95% - 90%: Stage 1 letter to confirm attendance.

90% - 88%: Stage 2 letter followed by a phone call welfare check from the Family Liaison Officer.

Below 88%: Stage 3 letter requesting either a meeting or a phone call with the Family Liaison Officer and a member of the senior leadership team. Within this meeting an action plan may be produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

When might a fixed term penalty notice be given?

1. A first penalty notice (£80 per parent per child) will be issued if a child has 10 sessions (5 days) of absence in a 10 week period.

This may be in a block or as individual sessions.

2. A second penalty notice (£160 per parent per child) will be issued if a child has a further 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period, within 36 months of the first period of absence.

Prosecution, leading to a fine of up to £2500 could occur if the threshold is triggered for a third time.

What absence is typically authorised?

Illness, medical appointments, attending an organised sporting event/ competition, exam, visiting a secondary school, including entrance exam; religious observance, close family wedding or funeral.

These will usually have a day or half day authorised, other than illness.

Appendix A: The Impact of Late Arrival at School

When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

Minutes late per Day	Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year	Which means this number of sessions missed
5 mins	3 Days	6 sessions
10 mins	6 Days	12 sessions
15 mins	9 Days	18 sessions
20 mins	12 Days	24 sessions

Appendix B: The Impact of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of sessions. Our school expectation is 96.4% attendance.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of sessions missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	19 Sessions
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	38 Sessions
88%	23 Days	4.3 Weeks	46 Sessions
85%	29 Days	5.4 Weeks	58 Sessions
80%	38 Days	7.3 Weeks	76 Sessions
78%	42 Days	2 Months and 2 days	84 Sessions
75%	48 Days	2 Months and 8 days	96 Sessions

Appendix C: 'Support First' Approach

<p>Expect</p>	<p>Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.</p>
<p>Monitor</p>	<p>Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.</p>
<p>Listen and understand</p>	<p>When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.</p>
<p>Facilitate support</p>	<p>Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.</p>
<p>Formalise support</p>	<p>Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.</p>
<p>Enforce</p>	<p>Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.</p>

Appendix D: Department for Education (DfE) Attendance & Absence Codes

Attending	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes as part of the travelling community
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure