

SOUTH DARLEY C.E.  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



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# SOUTH DARLEY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>Person/Committee responsible for reviewing/updating this plan</b>	Standards & Achievement
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<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>Governors Meeting Reference Number</b>	<b>Approved by name</b>	<b>Comments</b>

# South Darley CE Primary School

## Attendance Policy

### 1. Introduction

**1.1** At South Darley CE Primary School we pride ourselves on the good attendance of our children and at all times encourage our children and parents to be punctual so that our pupils can make the most of the opportunities which the school has to offer. Success in school is dependent on good attendance. It is therefore very important that you make sure that your child attends regularly and on time and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### 2. Our Expectations

**2.1** We expect all children on roll to attend every day when the school is in session, so long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed.

### 3. Registers

**3.1** Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

**3.2** Data from the school registers is collected and reported to parents via the annual report, the child's subsequent schools, the Local Authority and Department for Education. It also forms part of the schools collective data.

**3.3** It is crucial that children learn to arrive on time, both to acquire a disposition and discipline which will help them in later life, but also because lessons often begin with a teaching input/instructions for the day's lessons, which children who are late miss. The school day starts at 8:50am and the morning register is completed by 9:00am. The afternoon register is completed by 1:10pm. If a pupil arrives after the morning or afternoon register has been completed then they will be marked as arriving 'late'. If a pupil arrives for the morning session after 9:30am they will be marked as having an 'unauthorised absence'. Children arriving after 9:00am or 1:10pm **must** first report to the school office before attending class.

### 4. Absences

**4.1** The school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and each and every morning thereafter with the exception to this being where a specified period of absence has been agreed on the first morning e.g. 48 hours following the last episode of sickness/diarrhoea, chicken pox etc. Parents are expected to inform the school office of the nature of the illness/reason for absence when contacting the school.

**4.2** Where a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register.

**4.3** If we have not been informed of a child's absence by 9:30am, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent/carer/guardian to establish the reason for absence.

- 4.4** A child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no satisfactory explanation is given for absence or if the school considers the information received from the parent is not an acceptable reason for absence.
- 4.5** If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher will take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school office, in liaison with the SENCO will then establish contact with the parent and/or relevant external agencies, in order to check on the safety of the Child in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.6** The school monitors attendance and if a child's attendance drops below the school's target for attendance (97%) then the school may choose to talk to the parent / carer / guardian about this. If the school is not satisfied that attendance will improve, or that there is a reasonable explanation (such as a long period of illness), it may choose to involve the Local Authority's Educational Welfare Officer to support the child, parents and the school to enable all to work together to raise attendance levels.
- 4.7** Every effort should be made to arrange medical or dental appointments outside of school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, please ensure the school office is notified in advance where possible. The child must also be returned to the school directly after the appointment.

## **5. Definition of Absences**

- 5.1** Pupils will not be deemed as absent when out of school to take part in:
- School sporting activities
  - Representing the county/country at a particular sport when agreed in advance with the Headteacher
  - Educational school visits
  - Visiting other establishments in relation to their education e.g. schools or societies

## **6. Authorised Absence**

- 6.1** An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received advanced notification from a parent, carer or guardian.
- 6.2** Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents, carers or guardians do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents, carers or guardians will be classified as authorised.

## **7. Unauthorised Absence**

- 7.1** An absence is classed as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

## **8. Exceptional Circumstances**

- 8.1** To have a short absence to attend a family wedding or funeral, a special family celebration e.g. an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday or a family reunion where the arrangements cannot be made outside of school time may constitute exceptional circumstances. In addition, where a parent/carer/guardian, due to the nature of their work, cannot possibly take time off during the regular school holidays, e.g. parents in the armed forces or emergency services, then this may also constitute exceptional circumstance.

**8.2** To have a week's holiday in school time, because the cost is cheaper during term time, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

## **9. Holidays in Term Time**

**9.1** If you need to take your child out of school please note that current national legislation means that the school is only able to authorise absences if it is an exceptional circumstance. Under new government guidance, schools are also required to pass on details to the local authority of any child taken out of school or the purpose of a holiday. This may result in a fine being issued.

**9.2** Should you still wish to apply to take your child out of school during term time you will need to complete a 'leave of absence request form' which is available from the school office. This should be completed at least 2 weeks before the requested absence to allow time for the school to respond.

**9.3** In the case of family holidays, parents are advised only to book a holiday once a response from school has been received. Authorised leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. These can be explained within the form. The school will refer any unauthorised period of absence to the local authority who will then issue fines. Currently these are £120 per child per parent (reduced to £60 if the fine is paid on time).

**9.4** If the school believes that a child has been absent for a family holiday when they have been reported as ill, then the school will attempt to establish communication with the parents before treating the issue as an unauthorised absence.

**9.5** Parents who have children in year 6 are asked not to take their child out of school during test week for any reason at all. Pupils who are absent during this period can have a detrimental effect on the results of the school. The school will inform all parents of test weeks at the beginning of the academic year or as soon as practically possible afterwards.

## **10. Long Term Absence**

**10.1** When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their schoolwork.

**10.2** If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the relevant Local Authority support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

## **11. Inclement weather (or other reasons the school building may be closed)**

**11.1** In case of inclement weather (or other reason the school building may have to close) the school will endeavor to stay open for as long as it is safe to do so. Any decisions to close the school building will be communicated to parents at the earliest opportunity and the school will inform parents via the text messaging service in addition to publicising through the Derbyshire County Council website and on local radio. If you are in any doubt as to whether the school will be open or closed then please check the latest information on the Derbyshire County Council website or alternatively ring the school office.

**11.2** There will be five days during the school year when the school will be closed for staff-in-service training. These dates will be relayed to you at the earliest opportunity after the dates have been finalised.

- 11.3** Any decision to close the school building by the Headteacher or other authorised person will not have a detrimental effect on any child's attendance record.

## **12. Monitoring and Reviewing this Policy**

- 12.1** The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for the monitoring and reviewing of this policy.
- 12.2** Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their respective classes, and for following up absences in the appropriate way.
- 12.3** If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Headteacher who will review the individual's attendance and take any appropriate action in line with this policy.
- 12.4** This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every four years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Approved by the Governing Body Standards and Achievement Committee of South Darley CE Primary School on

Signed: A Jordan  
Chair of Governors  
29<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Signed: P Wilde  
Headteacher  
29<sup>th</sup> February 2016