

November 2021
Issue 1

SCPNS Attendance and Punctuality Newsletter



Why regular attendance is so important

South Camberley Primary and Nursery School is an inclusive school and we wish for all children to have the best educational experience they can. Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. Going to school helps to develop:

- Friendships
- Social skills
- Team values
- Life skills
- Cultural awareness
- Career pathways

If a child is regularly absent, they will fall behind with learning. Therefore attendance is fundamental in making sure young people become successful learners. When children attend school consistently, they are more likely to do well in their work, but also build strong relationships and feel connected with the school community.

And why is it so important to attend every day?

Learning is a progressive activity; each day's lessons build upon those of the previous days.

Classes also use discussions, demonstrations, experiments and participation as part of the daily learning activities, and these cannot be made up by those who are absent.

***Attendance
matters ... to
every child,
every day***

***Every day in school makes a difference to
your child's future ...***

Attendance

South Camberley Expectations

Expected absence procedure for parents

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly. However, if a child is unavoidably absent from school, parents are expected to:

- Telephone the school office on 01276 63870 by 9.30am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day to report the reason for the absence and expected date of return
- When requested, provide medical evidence, or other supporting documentation, that supports the level of absence. Examples of medical evidence include a dated medical appointment card, a photocopy of a signed and dated prescription, labelled medication packaging, a note or computer printout from a GP/hospital confirming your child has been seen, together with the reason
- If there is no contact from the parent, the Attendance Protocol will be instigated

Attendance Protocol

Where a pupil is absent without explanation, the school will respond as follows:

- The first day calling procedure will be activated for all pupils who are not in school by the close of register, by contacting the parent via phone or text
- If there is no response following the first day calling procedure, the school will contact the pupil's named emergency contacts

In certain circumstances, the school may also:

- Carry out a safeguarding home visit, or contact the police and/or social services where there are concerns for the immediate safety and welfare of the pupil
- Write to the parents to highlight attendance or punctuality issues
- Require parents to provide medical evidence, or other documentation, to support the level of absence
- Invite parents to a meeting to discuss how the school can support improved attendance
- Refer parents to the school's Education Welfare Service provider for formal intervention
- Refer to Surrey County Council requesting a penalty notice or to consider prosecution

Attendance and COVID 19

The onset of COVID has undoubtedly had a huge impact on learning and attendance at school. Since 8th March 2021, the expectation from the Government has been that every child should attend every day. We continue to follow our health and safety risk assessments and should we need to revert back to any COVID related restrictions, we have a contingency plan in place. This can be viewed on our website.

As of the date of this newsletter, children under the age of 18 do not need to isolate if they are a close contact of a positive case, or have a family member who has tested positive. We do however advise them to get a PCR test. Should your child have symptoms, again please get a PCR test and isolate until the result. Any child testing positive should follow the current Government isolation guidelines.

Leave of absence requests

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days to be authorised in the small amount of cases in which leave is granted, and proof may be required to validate your request.

Surrey County Council Fixed Penalty Policy

If your child is statutory school age, unauthorised absence of 5 days or more may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice. Penalty notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct.

A fixed penalty notice can be issued to those whom have parental responsibility for a child. **Each** parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each** child who is absent.

The fine would be to the cost of £60, to be paid within 21 calendar days. This will rise to £120 if not paid within 28 calendar days. If not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the absence.

If you would like to read more on penalty notices then please go to the Surrey County Council website where the information is readily available.

Medical Evidence

As a school, want to work in partnership with parents and are here to help support families having issues with attendance. The procedure of fines is a last resort and something we wish to avoid. This is why we, on occasion, require medical evidence to be able to keep our records up to date and negate the need to refer to Surrey.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to speak to the school office and should you wish, arrange to meet privately with our Education Welfare Officer.

Tips to help achieve good attendance:

- have a routine from an early age and stick to it
- make sure your child understands the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- make sure they understand the possible implications for themselves and you as a parent if they don't go to school
- take an interest in their education - ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities
- discuss any problems they may have at school and let their teacher know about anything that is causing concern
- do not let them take time off school for minor ailments or holidays during term time
- organising medical appointments for after school or in the holidays

Attend today, Achieve Tomorrow!

Consider this ...

This academic year, there are **190** statutory school days.

This leaves **175** days for shopping, birthday treats, non-urgent medical and dental appointments, holidays etc.

If a child misses 16 days of school in a year, they are out of school more than they are in.

If a child misses a day a week for their entire school life – it is equivalent to missing 2 years of school.



Attendance Incentives

We have devised a programme of incentives to encourage excellent attendance and punctuality and we will revisit them periodically.

We will celebrate 'best class attendance' and 'best class punctuality' each week. As well as certificates for their classroom doors, KS1 will keep the 'Attendance Bear' in their class as a reward and KS2 will have a trophy. Extra playtime will also be awarded.

Each half term, those with the highest attendance will get an invitation to have hot chocolate with Nicky Wright, our Executive Headteacher! They will also receive a personalised certificate. Pupils who have the 'most improved' attendance and punctuality will also be recognised.

At the end of each term, a special assembly will celebrate pupils who have achieved 100% attendance for that term. As well as collecting a badge and certificate, their names will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win a **grand prize!**



Punctuality

Being late affects both your child's learning and that of the rest of the class. Important instructions are missed and having to join the class when everybody else is settled and ready to learn can embarrass and worry many children.

School Timings

Year	Gates open	Registration
Nursery	8:30	8.35
Reception	8:40	8:50
Year 1	8:40	8:50
Year 2	8:40	8:50
Year 3	8:30	8:45
Year 4	8:30	8:45
Year 5	8:30	8:45
Year 6	8:30	8:45

‘The beginning of a great day, starts the night before ...’
Sukant Ratnakar

We operate a soft start, so pupils may arrive on site as from 8.30am / 8.40am (see above) and go straight to their classroom, to start their early morning activity.

Any child arriving after their allotted registration time will receive an L mark (late).

Arriving 30 minutes or more after registration receives a U mark, which counts as an unauthorized absence for that morning. This therefore counts against attendance as well as punctuality.

Escalation to EWO for persistent lates

If a child is persistently late, they will be referred to our Education Welfare Officer, who will work with you to help improve your child's punctuality.

Tips for getting to school on time:

- Get uniform ready the night before
- Prepare lunch boxes as much as you can the night before
- Put breakfast out the night before
- Get a good night's sleep / have a good bedtime routine
- Get up in plenty of time



