



'ALIS VOLAT PROPRIIS'

SEATON HOUSE SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date Reviewed: January 2020
Next Review Date: Spring 2022
Reviewed by: Head & SLT

Seaton House Attendance Policy

This policy applies to the whole school including Early Years Foundation Stage

1. Introduction

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated - pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance records tend to achieve less in their Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior years.

The Government expects the following from schools:

- to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- to ensure every pupil has high levels of attendance so they can access the education they are entitled to;
- to act early to address patterns of absence;
- to encourage parents to perform their legal duties by ensuring their child attends school regularly;
- to ensure all pupils are punctual to lessons.

2. School Day

- Nursery – Morning session 08.00 -13:15; Afternoon session: 15:15
Parents can collect at 12.00 noon if they wish.

All pupils Reception – FVI are required to be in school by 08:40.

The normal school day ends at the following times:

- Reception – 15:15
- Forms I to VI – 15:30

Pupils are registered at both the start of the morning and afternoon sessions each day.

3. Notifying the school of illness

If an occasion arises where your child is ill, please e-mail office@seatonhouse.sutton.sch.uk or telephone the school (020 8642 2332) before 09:00 each and every day of absence. If the school has not heard from a parent or guardian, we will always telephone in order to make sure that your child is safe. We ask that you make contact with us each day your child is going to be absent in order that we can keep our records updated and importantly, so that we can keep abreast of your child's progress to full health and anticipated return date.

4. Late Arrival

Our administrative systems electronically register the pupils and by 08:50 all pupils will be marked present, late or absent. It is therefore essential that if a pupil arrives late, she signs in at the School office so our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times. **For Early Years children, please ensure you sign your child in via the book at the main door of the Early Years building.**

At 09:30, if you have not contacted the school by telephone or email, a list will be generated of pupils who are not present and this will prompt our Office team to contact you.

5. Leaving school early during the day

Pupils are not normally allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff, for a trip, a visit or a sporting fixture. If a pupil has to leave the school during the day for illness or you are collecting her for a medical appointment, they are required to sign out at the office. **For Early years' children, they should sign out via the book at the main door of the Early Years building.**

6. Requests for absence

6.1 Requesting absence

If you wish to request an absence for any planned appointment or event, you should make the request in writing via email and send it to: office@seatonhouse.sutton.sch.uk marked 'absence request'.

6.2 Compassionate grounds or exceptional circumstances

Requests for leave of absence on compassionate grounds or in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance of the proposed absence when possible. Absence in exceptional circumstances does not include the following:

- birthdays;
- holidays;
- days out as a special treat;
- other family celebrations.

6.3 Authorising absence

The Government has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. The main areas where the school will authorise absence are given below:

- **6.3.1. Illness** Where schools accept that a pupil is ill, they must authorise the absence but can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.
- **6.3.2 Appointments** Dental and medical appointments are authorised absences but, where possible, such appointments should be made out of school hours.
- **6.3.3 Holidays** The Regulations state that time off for family holidays is not a right. Parents do not have the right to take a child out of school during term time. By law parents must ask prior permission for their child to miss school. The Regulations do not allow the school to give retrospective approval. The Headteacher is only able to authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If the Headteacher grants a leave request, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Authorised leave is unlikely to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday and you could face prosecution if you take your child out of school without permission.
- **6.3.4 Religious observance** The school will treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, the school may seek confirmation from that religious body that the day has been set apart for religious observance.
- **6.3.5 Exceptional circumstances / unavoidable causes** Authorised absence will be granted for compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement.

7. Poor attendance

The Department for Education (DfE) expects every pupil attending school to maintain an attendance level of approximately 90% and above; any figure below this is deemed as poor attendance.

- **7.1 Attendance and levels of achievement** Poor attendance is normally defined as anything below 90%. There is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement.
- **7.2 Persistent absentees** The Department for Education has changed the definition of 'Persistent Absence'. Pupils whose attendance is below 85 per cent are now officially classed as 'Persistent Absentees'. The school will be obliged to contact the parents if their child's attendance drops below that figure. If attendance does not improve and absence continues to be persistent, the school will contact Sutton Borough School Attendance Team

8. Summary of the law taken from the ISI inspection guidelines Regulation 3(15) "The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006". Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the "School Roll", and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met. The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very

prescriptive reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day pupils. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

9.Attendance registration system

The school uses SIMS, an electronic register system, which enables the school to record, report and monitor pupil attendance and absence.

10.Maintaining records and reporting to the authorities

The school's attendance register kept by means of a computer is backed up, in the form of an electronic copy, at least once a month and records are retained for three years after the end of the school year in question. There is no longer a requirement for independent schools to return absence data to the DfE, therefore absence statistics are not published in the DfE Achievement and Attainment Tables or in the annual Statistical First Release. All schools in membership of ISC take part in that organisation's annual census. From January 2009 it has been mandatory to include pupil ethnic monitoring data using the same methodology as the maintained sector.

Local authorities have a legal responsibility to identify children of compulsory school age who are not in education. Schools may therefore receive an enquiry about whether they are educating a specific child. Schools are required to alert their local authority after a pupil of compulsory school age has:

- been absent without authority for 10 consecutive school days, or
- failed to attend school regularly, or
- been removed from the school without the school being informed formally, in writing.

Reviewed by SLT January 2020