



**Schools for
Every Child**

SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD

Attendance Policy

Schools For Every Child is an education Trust that is committed to running dynamic, ever-improving schools. We work to make sure that every child feels they belong in their school where they feel safe and inspired by learning. For us, learning is an adventure. It is a privilege and a responsibility for all who work with us to ensure that the journey through school is exciting, challenging, caring and enriching, and that every child experiences joy, wonder, calm and success.

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“The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance”. (DfE)

This procedure works in conjunction with the following SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD policies and procedures that are all available on the SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD web site

- Equalities strategy
- Wellbeing strategy
- Capability management procedure
- Disciplinary procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Staff code of conduct
- Concerns and complaints policy

Purpose.

This policy is to ensure all SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD schools operate an attendance policy.

Roles and Responsibilities.

It is the responsibility of all Headteacher and their Local School Board to ratify an individual school attendance policy.

Policy.

It is the policy of SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD for all schools to create an attendance policy that rewards attendance rather than sanctions non-attendance.

Attendance.

Government has determined that absence from school is a key factor in children failing to reach their potential in centralised tests. They define regular attendance as 100% attendance. The responsibility for making children attend school has been passed to the Headteacher and Local School Board. SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD Schools are expected to ensure attendance is higher than 95% and unauthorised absence is as close to 0% as possible. Failure to have measures in place is sufficient to warrant an unsatisfactory judgement during inspection.

Sickness.

Sickness is counted as absence for this 95% attendance figure.

Holiday.

Holiday is counted as absence for this 95% figure and schools will not normally authorise holiday absence.

Other circumstances.

Absence to attend funerals, medical treatment and specialised learning events are also counted as absence for this 95% figure.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with.
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school.

SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD Expects Schools to:

- Follow up unexplained absences by text, phone calls and letters as soon as possible.
- Inform parents if their child's absence falls below 95%. This percentage is important as in term one, a few days can equate to a high percentage.
- Publish your child's attendance rate on their annual school report.

- Follow the procedure for absence that fits the criteria for a fixed penalty.
- If we continue to have concerns, make a referral to the Missing Education and Child Employment Service (MECES) who monitor school registers regularly.
- Above all, acknowledge and reward good attendance through a meaningful reward system.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at the school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). They define regular attendance as 100% attendance. This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department of Education and Skills, and the Local Authority. The Missing Education and Child Employment Service (MECES) aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However, in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absence continues. To be clear, if term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in the legal framework, parents/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action.

Schools are now legally considered front line services in identifying child abuse. Research shows that there is a strong association between school absence and children that require protection. SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD schools will always act in accordance with the law to protect children.