

Parents' Guide to Attendance

At Swanmore CE (A) Primary School, we are keen for children to achieve in all areas of their lives and for this to happen we know that children need to be in school.

The national average for attendance is 96.1% and for Hampshire schools it is 96.5%. Ours currently stands at 95.9% This is concerning as it has been found that such levels of attendance can negatively impact on GCSE achievement by 3 grades, which is obviously significant.

Following advice from Hampshire, we have revised our procedures and we will adopt the following steps in an effort to support those families where attendance is an issue.

Attendance

1. When a child is absent and we do not know why, we will phone you to ensure they are safe.
2. When there appears to be a pattern of absence, an adult from your class will speak with you to see if there is anything we can do to support.
3. We will track attendance twice within each half term – midway and at the end. Should attendance fall below 96% we will telephone you to alert you to this, so that it can be improved.
4. Should the child's attendance fall below 96% again, we will write to you alerting you to this to offer support.
5. Should this repeat you will be invited into school to meet me, so we can, together, understand what support can be offered and we will offer the support of the Early Help Hub. A meeting of different agencies that can offer support to barriers for attendance. Should this support be declined, all further absence will become unauthorised from that point and when the threshold for unauthorised absence is met, a referral to the Area Legal Panel will be made.
6. If there is still no improvement the school will send a warning letter stating that if there is no improvement a Penalty Notice will be issued.
7. Again, if there is no improvement a Penalty Notice will be issued.

We hope we will never reach this point, however, should attendance fall below 90%, this is then classed as 'Persistent Absenteeism' (PA). Should this happen, a further penalty notice will be issued. The maximum number of penalty notices is two per child, during a 12 month period, following this, a referral to the Area Legal Panel will be made.

Lateness

We will also track lateness. This means that should your child arrive at school after the register has been taken at 9.00am, they will be recorded as late.

1. If your child is persistently late (10 registrations) after the register is closed after 9.15am a family will be fined.
2. If a child is consistently late before the register closes (before 9.15am) and we have met you to explain further times will be unauthorised and then 10 sessions are late; a fine will be issued.

Unauthorised holidays of 10 or more sessions (5 days) automatically incur a penalty payment.

We do not wish to issue a penalty payment, money from the penalty payments do not come to the school, it goes to the county.

The school has adopted this approach in response to the updated Code of Conduct, issued April 2018, a copy of which is available on the school website or from the school office.

John Paterson
Headteacher
July 2018