



Severne Junior, Infant and (NC) School

Attendance
Handbook
2021-2022



97% - 100%

*Up to 6 days of absence (per year)
Keep it up! High attendance can lead to
high achievement.*

95% - 97%

*Up to 10 days absence (per year)
This can impact on future achievement. Con-
tinued fall in attendance is worrying and
cause for concern.*



90% - 95%

*Up to 19 days missing from school.
Your child is missing too many days from
school. There is a risk of lower achieve-
ment. There is a high risk of court action*



Below 90%

*More than 20 days absent.
There is a high risk of court action un-
der the Fast Track Programme. and
possible Penalty Notices issued*



Table of Contents

	Page
Our Staged Response to Absences from School	4
Term Time Leave of Absence	5
Attendance Facts for all Parents/Carers	6
Why does coming to school every day matter?	7
It doesn't matter if we are a bit late... or does it?	8
What is the Law about attendance?	9
Attendance Letter from BCC	10 - 11
Education Welfare Services	12
For our children, the chance to achieve, regular attendance means regular rewards	13
For your child's welfare	14
And finally.....	15

OUR STAGED RESPONSE TO ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

- **Arrange an urgent meeting / home visit:** to meet with Parent/Carer to discuss absence where there has been a fall in attendance without explanation.
- **Parents/Carers Agreements:** If attendance becomes problematic, Parents/Carers will be required to sign an agreement with school to improve attendance with immediate effect.
- **Failure to improve:** or respond after the next 5 academic days could prompt a referral to outside agencies.
- **There may also:** be a **'Safe and Well'** check carried out at the current address by local Police (Safeguarding) if school is unable to meet with Parents/Carers.
- **Please be advised that:** Local authorities are now issuing **'Penalty Notice Fines'** for **'Persistent Absence'**.
- **It may be necessary for:** written agreement to be sort to contact your GP for confirmation of health issues if school attendance becomes problematic for your child.
- **Prolonged unexplained absence:** may result in the loss of a school place at Severne Primary School.

Please note:

ABSENCE

All absences are to be covered by a phone call to the school before 9:30am every day of absence followed by a written note when your child returns to school.

NOTE: Where absence is prolonged or problematic, **proof of a visit to G.P. e.g. appointment card or prescription will be required.**

TERM – TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Term-time leave will only be granted where there are exceptional circumstances.

Leave taken for the purpose of holidays will be recorded as unauthorised.

This code will be an unauthorised absence and will be pursued under the Leave in Term Time programme, which may incur a fine under the Birmingham City Council, Education Welfare Service Court Section.



All leave **must** be applied for **prior** to the leave being taken.

Amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, means that Headteachers will no longer authorise leave during term time apart from where the circumstances are exceptional. This is also in accordance with Birmingham Local Authority's 'Leave in Term Time Guidance'.

Leave taken without notice will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please understand that this may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice and legal action being taken or your child losing their school place.

Penalty Notice – Code of Conduct

This document is issued in compliance with the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2007 and the Education Act 1996. Section 444A of the Act states that, if it is believed that a child has failed to attend school regularly and the parent is therefore guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of the Act:

- *a Penalty Notice may be issued for £60, if it is paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice;*
- *rising to £120, if it is paid after 21 days, but within 28 days of receipt;*
- *non-payment will entitle the Local Authority to prosecute the parent for the original offence, under section 444(1) of the Act.*

This Code of Conduct will govern the issuing of the above Penalty Notices for schools across Birmingham.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Where possible it is advisable to make appointments outside of school hours.

Where this is unavoidable please bring your appointment letter/card to the school office to be copied for your child's records, this will enable school to authorise this absence.

ATTENDANCE FACTS FOR ALL PARENTS/CARERS

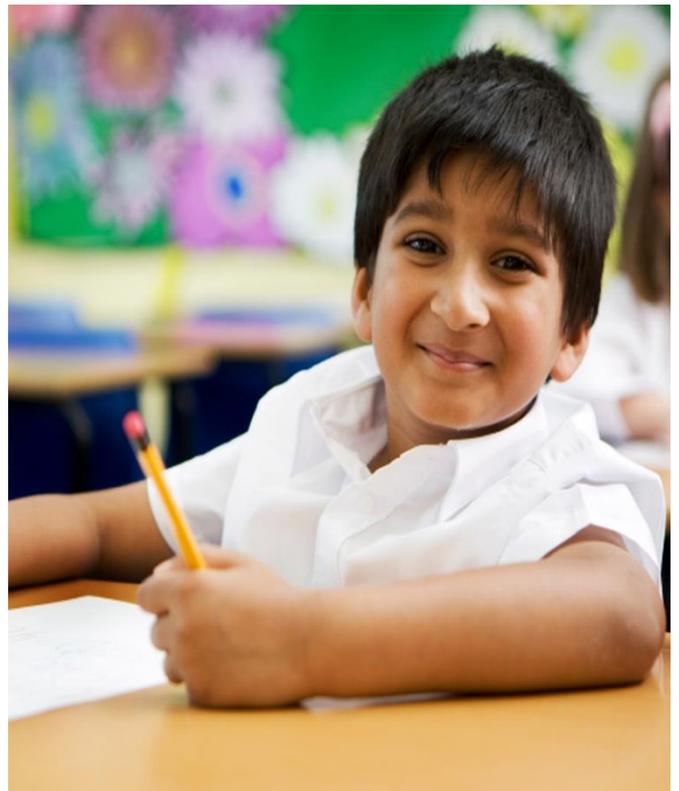
- ✓ All pupils are expected to reach attendance levels of **97%** and above to be able to access and achieve their potential at school.
- ✓ Pupils only attend school for 190 days per academic year (this means that for the other 175 days they are at home with you!)
- ✓ In line with current recommendations term time leave will only be granted for exceptional circumstances.
- ✓ Persistent absence from school may be investigated and fines could be implemented for each child to each Parent/Carer.
- ✓ Be aware of the chart below, this will help you understand our attendance levels.

Level	Percentage	Meaning
<i>Excellent</i>	<i>97% 100%</i>	<i>Excellent Attendance</i>
<i>Good</i>	<i>95 to 97%</i>	<i>Good Attendance</i>
<i>Monitored</i>	<i>Below 95%</i>	<i>Worrying less chance of success advised improvement</i>
<i>Persistently below 90%</i>	<i>Below 90%</i>	<i>Serious concerns, concerns shared with Education Welfare Services (Possible Court Action and Penalty Notices issued)</i>

Why do I go to school?

Here's what pupils say:

- ✓ To learn more about everything
- ✓ To find out about the world
- ✓ To have fun making and doing things
- ✓ To be happy with friends
- ✓ To share what we can do
- ✓ To work together with everyone
- ✓ To get a good job
- ✓ To get good examination results



WHY DOES COMING TO SCHOOL EVERY DAY MATTER?

If you don't come to school regularly:

- ✓ You might feel a bit left out
- ✓ You may not know how to do the work
- ✓ You may get left behind
- ✓ You may have to make friends again



Coming to school every day is important because it helps:

- ✓ To get the best from education offered in our school.
- ✓ To make and keep good friendships.

If you miss school, you miss lessons which may not be repeated.

Being absent from school makes it hard to catch up with missed work and affects how well children do.

This means:



- **½ day absent = 3 morning or afternoon lessons missed**
- **1 day absent = 5 lessons missed**
- **3 days absent = 15 lessons missed**
- **1 week absent = 25 lessons missed**
- **2 weeks absent = 50 lessons missed**

This is lost valuable learning time and cannot be recaptured!

Your child deserves a good education and all the opportunities that education can give them in life.

Together we can help your child to achieve.

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF WE ARE A BIT LATE...OR DOES IT?

Here are some of the reasons why it does.

Did you know?

- ✓ It looks bad on your child's record because it counts as unauthorised absence (truancy)
- ✓ Your child misses instructions or interrupts lessons
- ✓ Good time-keeping helps your child become reliable and organised.

A good record of punctuality and attendance helps your child's chances of a successful future.



What happens if I arrive late?

What some pupils have said;

- It can make you feel embarrassed
- It's awful when people stare at you
- It makes you worry
- I get a scared feeling.

Get into a good routine and make a good start to the day.

**Please Remember Our School Day Starts at 8.30am
(End of Registration 8.50am)**

WHAT IS THE LAW ABOUT ATTENDANCE?

Basically, Parents/Carers have to make sure that children aged 5 to 16 years receive adequate education.

It's the law!

(Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Parents can be taken to Court for breaking this law.

The policy from the Government Department for Education (May 1994) also says:

“Parents/Carers should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn.”

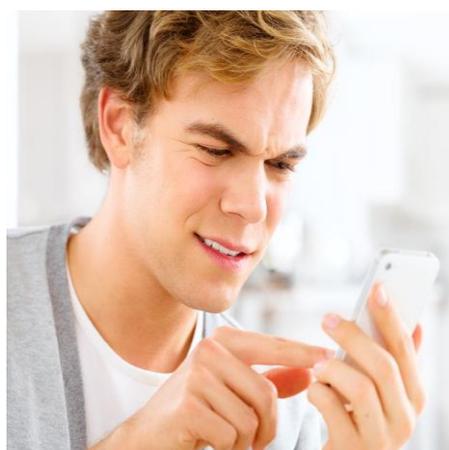
The Act also mentions that:

“Parents/Carers need to see themselves as partners with schools in the education of their children. This includes making sure that pupils complete homework on time and that their children keep school rules about behaviour.”

We use the ‘Fast Track Attendance Campaign’ and request Parents/Carers adhere to this.

What about absences?

It is important to get a message to school.(Phone before 9:30am)



It is the duty of a Parent/Carer to contact school on the first day of absence to explain why their child is not in school. An absence for an unacceptable or unexplained reason will not be authorised and will appear on your child's attendance record as unauthorised absence.

Parents and Carers can only explain absences, they cannot authorise them.

Only the Headteacher / school can authorise an absence.

If your child has frequent absences, school will contact you to find out what can be done to help get your child back into school regularly.

School Attendance

A very important message for all Parents/Carers

Dear Parent/Carer,

Severne Primary School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance. We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly.

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work?

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons are missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006. **Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.**

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue), family holidays (unless authorised by the Head teacher by pre-arrangement) are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

Legal action that may be taken includes:

- Issuing penalty notices: Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence: **Education Act 1996 Section 444(1)** - court can fine each parent up to £1000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.
- Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence: **Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A)** - court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Being taken to court could result in you having a criminal record.

Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.

If your child's level of absence is of serious concern, the school will offer advice and support to improve attendance. After this, any unauthorised absence may result in the School and the Local Authority taking legal action.

If you have concerns about your child's school attendance please contact the school urgently. They may be able to assist you or even offer you an Early Help Assessment.

Again, we would like to thank those parents who make sure their child is attending school regularly and are therefore benefiting fully from their educational opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

E. Langley

Lead Attendance Officer
Education Legal Intervention Team
Alternative Provision, Attendance, and Independent Education Service

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICES

We have changed the way that attendance is monitored at Severne and are working in partnership with 'The Education Welfare Services.

- ✓ We at Severne Primary School are challenging attendance below 95% and problematic cases of persistent absence.
- ✓ We monitor punctuality issues and are helping you, our Parents/Carers, to address them.
- ✓ We offer support for families where these issues maybe impacting on a child's performance.

Please note: this is a positive change for our children and we welcome support from outside agencies who may pursue actions to achieve better outcomes for all children at Severne Primary School.

These may include pursuing court action with Penalty Fines for Parents/Carers where attendance issues are not addressed.

FOR OUR CHILDREN, 'THE CHANCE TO ACHIEVE'

Regular Attendance Means Regular Rewards

We believe in rewarding good attendance and with this in mind undertake several initiatives which take place weekly, termly and annually which gives all of our children a chance to contribute and gain rewards for good attendance.

Weekly: Each week one of our Classes receives a certificate and trophy for 'Best Class Attendance' that week.



Termly: Each child with fantastic attendance between 97%-100% will receive an Attendance Certificate.

Annually: We are excited to announce that we will be holding book awards with a book going to the child with the highest attendance in each class, our children love to read and the decision to award books has been championed by our School Council.



FOR YOUR CHILD'S WELFARE



Our first priority is your child's welfare and therefore there may be occasions when our concern about your child means that we have to consult other agencies even before we contact you as per our statutory duty.

The procedures we follow have been laid down by the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board.



AND FINALLY...

To Our Parents/Carers

We acknowledge that our children rely entirely on the hard work and continued efforts of you our Parents/Carers.

We would like to say a big 'thank you' to you for your help, support and commitment with the education of our child.

Our Attendance Policy can be found on our website at:

www.severne.bham.sch.uk