

# Summerfields

PRIMARY SCHOOL



**Reviewed: January 2023**

**Next Review: January 2025**

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'T.J. Murphy'.



**SUMMERFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**RATIONALE**

Regular attendance at school is essential for the continuity of the learning experience. Therefore, we expect all children to attend school unless they are ill.

**AIMS:**

- To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school
- It is the responsibility of all those associated with the school to make attendance and punctuality a priority.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.

**RESPONSIBILITY AND MONITORING:**

- The Head Teacher and Quality and Provision Committee are responsible for monitoring the policy.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education and Inclusion Service and with other services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

## **GUIDELINES**

### **1. Absence**

If a child is absent, the parent must contact the school by making a telephone call each day the child is absent before 9.30am, stating a specific reason why the child cannot come to school. School will make first day phone call to home to ascertain the reason for children's absence, if no reason for absence has been received. All reasons for absence will be recorded and monitored by the school.

### **2. Lateness**

Lateness is defined as arrival in school after 8.45am. Children who arrive between 8.45am and 9.00am will have a "late" mark placed on the register. The registers will then be closed at 8.55am. Therefore arrival after this time is recorded as an absence. The minutes late will also be noted and placed on record. However children who arrive after 9.00am may have their lateness authorised, depending on the reason, for instance a medical appointment. Late children must be signed in by an adult at reception, with an explanation for their lateness; these reasons will be monitored by the school.

### **3. Monitoring Lateness**

School will closely monitor the lateness recorded for individual children and take into consideration the reasons. Regular lateness will prompt the following stages:

#### *Stage 1*

Three lates or more over a three week period will prompt the action of an initial letter from the school requesting parents' co-operation for improvement.

#### *Stage 2*

If there is no improvement over the next two weeks, a second letter will be sent to parents reminding them of the initial request for co-operation on ensuring their children arrived to school on time. Parents will also be invited in to discuss the issues causing the lateness and be offered support to improve punctuality.

#### *Stage 3*

If after three weeks lateness is still causing an issue, a third letter will be sent to parents stating that due to lack of improvement, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will need to be involved. The EWO will either make a home visit, write to the family or request a meeting with the family. The monitoring of lateness will then be the shared responsibility of the EWO and the school.

#### **4. Monitoring Absence**

The school will closely monitor the attendance of individual children and take into consideration the reasons. Regular absence will prompt the following stages:

##### *Stage 1*

School will monitor the registers half termly. This will trigger questions regarding regular absences of individual children. Class teachers may speak to parents to talk to them about their child's attendance. If a child's attendance is below 92%, a letter will be sent out identifying the number of sessions missed, explain their legal responsibility and invite parents for a meeting with the school to discuss any support.

##### *Stage 2*

After a formal meeting with the school, the child's attendance will be monitored weekly. If no improvement is made, parents will be invited to attend a meeting at the school to discuss the issue further. The EWO is then informed about the process and recommended to attend the next meeting.

##### *Stage 3*

If there is still no improvement, the school will then refer the family to the Education Welfare Service. Continued tighter monitoring will then be undertaken by the EWS and a legal process begins.

#### **5. Authorised Absence**

The following are the occasions when an absence will be authorised:

- When a child is ill and a written explanation by the parent received.
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be made during the holidays or after school
- Family bereavements
- Days of religious observance
- Offsite educational activities which occur on an occasional basis, ie sporting events, music examinations or public performances in which children are participating.
- Attendance at other educational establishments.

#### **6. Request to take a child out of school during term-time**

Parents need to complete a request for a leave of absence in writing if they wish to take their child out of school. The Head Teacher will not authorise the absence unless it is for exceptional circumstances as per Government guidelines.

In the case of an unauthorised holiday the Education Welfare Service will be notified of the holiday and a Penalty Notice may be issued. Please note that such a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60.00 if paid within 21 days which increases to £120.00 if not paid within 28 days. Thereafter if the Penalty remains unpaid this may result in legal action being taken against you.

**7. Referral to the Education Welfare Officer**

- Unexplained absences may be referred
- All pupils who fail to attend regularly
- Any absence where the school experiences difficulty in determining whether or not the absence is authorised or unauthorised
- Repeated lateness
- Repeated early removal from school

**8. No child is to be removed from the school premises during school hours without parental authority.**

**9. Children removed from school during the day**

There is an "absence during school hours" record book at the office. Entries need to be made for every child that leaves/returns to school during the school day.

**School Organisation**

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the school has the following responsibilities:

**Head/Deputy Head Teacher, governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:**

- Adopt the whole policy
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided
- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence
- Key staff will liaise and follow-up work with EWO and appropriate access to attendance data
- Consult and liaise closely with EWO on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
- To work in close collaboration with EWO during their termly/half termly register analysis
- Set whole school attendance targets
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with EWO

**Office Staff:**

- To oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually
- To liaise with Education and Inclusion regularly
- To reinforce good practice
- To share the class teacher's concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Education Welfare Officer.

**Class Teachers:**

- To complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- To record all reasons for absences in the register
- To contact parents/carers to discuss concerns about attendance
- To inform the Head Teacher of concerns
- To be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Head Teacher.