



## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **1. Rationale**

Good attendance and punctuality ensure optimum available use of teaching and learning time.

### **2. Aims**

To actively encourage attendance and punctuality.

To actively promote a minimum expected attendance figure of 96% for all our pupils.

### **3. Objectives**

- 3.1 To promote attendance through a positive school environment.
- 3.2 To work closely with parents:-
  - 3.2.1 To alert them to their legal responsibilities for attendance;
  - 3.2.2 To inform them how to apply for leave of absence for special circumstances;
  - 3.2.3 To identify procedures for contacting the Academy over absence;
  - 3.2.4 To indicate the procedures the Academy will use to follow up short or long term absence;
  - 3.2.5 To clarify action to be taken by parents to confirm absence.
- 3.3 To maintain accurate records of attendance, punctuality and reasons for absence through tutor group registers.
- 3.4 To check registers regularly for any patterns of absence and act accordingly.
- 3.5 To acknowledge the legal status of registers and ensure appropriate security.
- 3.6 To report on authorised and unauthorised absence as required by the DFEE.

### **4. Procedures and Practice**

- 4.1 Staff and pupils promote and support a positive personal, social, moral and spiritual culture throughout the Academy.
- 4.2 Good attendance will be acknowledged in pupils' reports.
- 4.3 Through the Academy prospectus to inform parents of the procedures and practices regarding attendance (Appendix 1).
- 4.4 Form Tutors and Heads of Year will be vigilant in checking registers for any patterns of absence, informing parents and involving the Educational Safeguarding Team (EST) as appropriate.
- 4.5 Form Tutors will keep accurate records of attendance, punctuality, and reasons for absence.
- 4.6 Selwood Academy follows the Local authority Code of Conduct to address attendance. This may include the use of statutory powers which involves the use of penalty notices and court prosecution. Schools will now be able to request, to the Educational Safeguarding Team, an immediate penalty notice for parents whose children have 10 consecutive sessions (5 days) unauthorised leave within the last 12 weeks. Schools can issue a warning penalty notice where there are 10 unauthorised session or more in the last 12 weeks. The criteria for 'passing' a warning has moved from 90% attendance in the 15 day period to 100% attendance. Parents taking their child on holiday during term time will be subject to unauthorised absence. Leave can only be granted for exceptional circumstances. See appendices. (Appendices I, II).
- 4.7 Parents will be required to provide medical evidence for any absence of three days consecutively.
- 4.8 Persistent poor attendance and lack of engagement with EST support may result in prosecution.

The Selwood Academy Attendance Guidelines for Parents and Pupils will be included in the prospectus and will contain the following information about attendance:-

- A reminder to parents that absence has a detrimental effect on children's progress;
- A statement promoting 100% attendance and parents' responsibilities in support of this aim;
- A requirement that reasons for absence are confirmed by letter, telephone or email;
- A request for telephone confirmation of legitimate absence on every morning, otherwise the Academy will phone to ascertain the reason for absence.
- the need to request permission from the Academy in advance of planned extended absence using the forms available from Reception;
- knowledge that any concerns about patterns of absence will be communicated to parents as soon as they are identified;
- Confirmation that the Academy reviews attendance and punctuality fortnightly and PTL's may request assistance from the EST through the completion of an Early Help Assessment (this does not require parental consent).

## APPENDIX I Attendance Matters Leaflet

### ABSENCE LINE

Let us know immediately when your child cannot attend school.

Call the Attendance Line on  
01373 468615

Please have the following information to hand. You will be asked to provide some, or all of it, when you call:

- Pupil Name
- Pupil Tutor Group
- Reason for absence
- Have you made a Doctor's appointment?

Children are required, by law, to attend school 190 days per year.

95% Attendance = 50 lessons missed  
90% Attendance = 100 lessons missed  
85% Attendance = 150 lessons missed  
80% Attendance = 200 lessons missed  
75% Attendance = 250 lessons missed  
70% Attendance = 290 lessons missed

**65% Attendance**  
**= 13.5 weeks absent**  
**= 340 lessons missed**

### Why does attendance matter?

#### The Importance of Good Attendance

Research shows that there is a direct link between excellent attendance and high achievement at school.

Pupils who attend 96% or more are likely to achieve their academic potential.

For example, 90% attendance might sound quite acceptable but what that means is.....

- On average half a day of school is missed every week. Would an employer think this is an acceptable rate of attendance?
- In one year, 4 whole weeks of schooling are missed.
- In 3 years it would mean a third of a school year is missed. That's a whole term off.
- You may drop a GCSE grade in each subject.

The better your attendance, the better your achievement will be.

Pupils who attend 96% or more are likely to fulfil their academic potential.

For example:

- Absence one day a month gives a 87% chance of getting 5 9-5 grades at GCSE
- Absence one day a fortnight gives a 75% chance of getting 5 9-5 grades at GCSE
- Absence one day a week gives a 20% chance of getting 5 9-5 grades at GCSE

*Habits of poor attendance and lateness in school are often repeated in working life which is why employers ask schools for attendance and punctuality information as part of references.*

### What Selwood is doing to ensure Good Attendance

At Selwood all staff understand how important attendance is and encourage a positive ethos regarding attendance and punctuality for all pupils. Individual attendance is monitored closely.

Good Attendance is celebrated in the following ways:

Certificates are awarded for pupils with 100% excellent attendance at our Christmas, Easter and Summer Celebration Assemblies.

### PARENT & FAMILY SUPPORT ADVISOR

The Parent & Family Support Advisors, work in partnership with families and the school to help your child be as successful as possible.

They may be asked to help where regular attendance and lateness is a problem. Lateness to school is monitored by our Parent Support Advisor who may make contact if concerns arise.

AM Registers close at 9.00am. Absence will be recorded as unauthorised after this time and may be subject to prosecution by SCC.

### Categories of Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are reviewed regularly and pupils fall into one of the categories below:

#### 100% Excellent Certificate

**Below 96%**  
School will contact the parent as cause for concern. PFSA/EWO may be involved.

**Below 93%**  
Serious cause for concern, equal to 14 days absence an academic year. Your Pastoral Team Leader will contact you. PFSA or PSA may be involved.

#### Persistently Absent (PA) Pupils 90% Attendance

Pupils are designated as Persistent Absentee (PA) when they are absent for 10% or more of their learning. This equates to 20 days absence per year or

**Term 1 - 4 days**  
**Term 2 - 7 days**  
**Term 3 - 10 days**  
**Term 4 - 13 days**  
**Term 5 - 16 days**  
**Term 6 - 20 days**

The Education Welfare Officer will be involved with any PA pupils. Parents will be informed when a pupil is approaching or has reached PA status.

#### Cause for Concern

If your child falls into the Concern or Serious Concern categories (see Categories of Attendance) then one of more of the following could occur:

1. School makes regular contact with home.
2. Parents and Family Support Advisor becomes involved.
3. School liaises with the Education Welfare Officer and she may become involved.
4. Follow up attendance meeting for parents, pupils and Education Welfare Officer.
5. Possible legal action if there is no improvement.



## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Selwood Academy aims to ensure all pupils establish the highest levels of attendance. Pivotal to this is the strong relationship between the school, parents and pupils working together.

Guidelines for Parents & Pupils

### Two Major Issues Affecting Attendance:

#### HOLIDAYS AND MEDICAL ABSENCE

There are 190 school days in a year and 175 combined holiday and weekend days per year.

#### Holiday

Taking your son\daughter out of school for two weeks (10 days) will reduce attendance to 94% before any account is taken of days off for illness etc.

Pupils who are taken out of school for holidays may never catch up on work missed. Much of this learning is communicated verbally and cannot be replicated. The law says "parents do not have the right to take their children out of school for holidays during term time."

If the school refuses a request for term time

holidays and the pupil is still taken out of

school this is recorded as an

**UNAUTHORISED** absence.

#### Medical

We are very supportive of pupils with chronic illnesses and will do all we can to ensure that these pupils are fully included in mainstream education. We work with the Medical Tuition Service when necessary.

We, as a school, have to satisfy ourselves that absences are warranted. For 3 days of continuous absence a written request for medical evidence will be sent by letter.

## TERM TIME LEAVE ADVICE FOR SCHOOLS AND PARENTS



Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) and came into force on 1 September 2013.

The amendments made it clear that Headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave must be made in writing to the Headteacher in advance.

There is no formal definition offered for exceptional leave at present by the Department for Education. However, from discussion with the DfE and professional associations it is suggested that exceptional leave would be:

- Rare
- Significant
- Unavoidable
- Short

(NAHT, 2014)

Somerset County Council (SCC) supports schools:

- In expecting parents and carers to make sure that children and young people attend school regularly. Any absence from school will impact on educational achievement, success in later life and longer term health and well being
- In ensuring the law is upheld. Parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where they are on roll. Schools must explain their stance on term time leave in their attendance policy so that parents/carers are clear on expectations and potential consequences, such as any unauthorised absence including taking term time leave not agreed with the school, can result in legal action being taken including Penalty Notices and court prosecution.

SCC cannot override a school's decision not to authorise any term time leave.

Taking a child on holiday in term time interrupts the learning of the whole class and teachers have to spend time helping children catch up when they return. Parents should arrange holidays during the 13 week school holiday periods. Schools are open 190 days which leaves 175 days of the year for holidays.

Attached are suggested forms schools may wish to use when asked by parents/ carers for term time leave. Schools may wish to develop their own request forms.