



Millside Spencer Attendance Policy

Person Responsible: Sophia Thorne, Principal

Date: May 2022

Review Date: May 2023

Issue	Date	Approved	Signature	Revision Notes	Next Review
1	May 2022	S Thorne		Policy created	Dec 2022



Statement

At Millside Spencer Academy we believe that regular attendance at school is important to ensure the best possible outcomes for all our children. We support the view that every lesson counts and so encourage our children to attend every session possible.

Aim

- To raise attendance.
- To improve punctuality.
- To make attendance a priority for the whole school including governors, pupils, parents and staff.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

At Millside Spencer Academy our school day begins and finishes at the following times:

- Registration 8:45am, end of day 3:20pm
- Gates open at 8:35am

Parents' Responsibilities

Under section 7 of the 1966 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs that a child might have.

School's Responsibilities

It is the school's responsibility to regularly monitor school attendance and to inform parents and governors of their findings. All schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of **10 days or more** where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the children missing in Education Officer.



Absence

- All absences should be authorised by a parent or carer, either by phone, letter or visit to school.
- Reasons for a child's absence cannot be accepted from:
 - A neighbour
 - A sibling
 - A peer
 - The child themselves upon their return to school
- We operate a first day calling system. This means that if a child is reported as absent after the registers have closed in the morning, and the school has not been made aware by the parent/carers of the reason for absence, the school will contact the parent/carers to ascertain the reason for their child's absence.
- If the parent/carers is unable to be contacted by phone then a text message will be sent asking them to contact us as soon as possible.
- If the parent/carers does not respond to the text message and the other contacts are not available a home visit will be made.

Acceptable Reasons for Absence

- Illness or injury
- Religious observation
- Hospital, doctor or dentist appointments which cannot be made out of school time. Where possible doctor and dentist appointments to be made out of school time
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. sudden injury, serious illness or death of a close relative. (However, we will expect the parent to make suitable arrangements for their child to attend school as soon as possible.)

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given:

- Treatment for head lice.
- Days off for shopping, haircuts or looking after younger siblings.
- Visiting friends and relatives, or days out.



- Holidays
- Oversleeping
- Parent attending an appointment and taking the child with them. We have a Breakfast and After School Club to help parents with this.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.

Absence due to Family Holiday

It is the school's policy not to authorise holidays during term time. If parents then chose to remove their children from school for holidays these absences will be considered unauthorised. If the level of absence is above 6 sessions/3 days in total over a 6 week rolling period the school will request the Local Authority to issue an Educational Penalty Notice to each parent of each child to whom the unauthorised absence applies. The Local Authority will determine in some cases whether to issue a Penalty Notice or take straight to Prosecution. Please refer to the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) or 444 (1A).

Unauthorised Absence

Where no reason for absence has been notified and we have been unable to contact a parent/carer to authorise a child's absence or received a letter upon the child's return to school, such absence will be treated as unauthorised. This will be entered as an "O" in the school register and recorded as such in SIMS.

Once a child has reached above 6 sessions/3 days unauthorised absence over a rolling 6 week period, the school can issue a warning letter. The letter will make it clear that any further absence may result in the issuing of an Educational Penalty Notice to each parent for each child to whom persistent absence applies

Attendance Support

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties with attendance should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. Alternatively parents or children may wish to contact Family Services themselves to ask for help or information. They are



independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

Persistent absence

- Persistent absenteeism is 90% and below
- When attendance falls below 95% - Letters of concern will be sent to parents and where appropriate meeting to be held with attendance support.

If attendance continues to decline further action will be taken

- Below 90% - Attendance meeting with the Principal and attendance support staff, if no improvement a further meeting will be arranged with a member of the Governing body
- If no improvement and if appropriate referrals will be made to family services through completion of an Early Help Assessment Form. The Education Authority has a duty to become involved if they believe that a child is not getting the education required by law.
- For pupils who have less than 90% attendance, proof of medical appointments will be requested to authorise any further absence due to illness and any other absence may be unauthorised
- Families who make significant improvements in attendance will receive letters of recognition due to supporting their child attendance at school every day.

Keeping the Attendance Register

The daily electronic attendance register is a legal document and as such must be completed twice daily; at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions, this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved education activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of a compulsory school age is absent, every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Late Attendance



Punctuality is of utmost importance. Parents and children arriving late will be requested to sign the punctuality register, noting down the reason for being late and any learning missed due to lateness. Children who arrive late will be provided with work to complete to ensure that any missed learning is completed prior to the start of the following school day.

- Gates close at 8:50am.
- A child will be deemed late (“L”) if they arrive after 9.01am for the morning session or after 12.55 pm for the afternoon session.
- Registers close at 9:15am. Any child arriving after this time will be recorded as “U”.
- If a child is repeatedly late the parent/carer will receive a letter informing them of this. Significant lateness or a pattern of lateness will be reported to the Principal.

Role of the Class Teacher

- To complete the registers in full twice per day.
- To inform the Attendance Officer if a reason is given for absence verbally in the classroom/keep any written notes in the register.
- To raise concerns with Head of School.

Role of the Principal

- To monitor attendance and punctuality weekly.
- To report back to the Governing Body in the termly report to Governors.
- To liaise with staff.
- To ensure referrals to targeted support have been made.
- To ensure warning letters are issued if attendance falls below 95%
- To make families aware of their responsibilities.
- To enforce the message that holidays will not be authorised.

Role of the Attendance Lead / Office Administrator

- To undertake first day calling - contact those parents who do not inform school of reasons of absence within first hour of school.



- To record reason given for absence in the absence register and log code in the official school register.
- To pass information on to staff/raise concerns with staff or Principal.
- To record/monitor attendance electronically in SIMS.
- To send standard letters on to parents/carers.
- To record the arrival times of those who are late and the reason given.

Role of the Governing Body

- To monitor the school's authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To encourage a positive approach to attendance and punctuality.
- To support the school in raising awareness of the need for full attendance in order to achieve high standards for all pupils.

Role of Pupils and their Families

- To make sure that the child attends regularly and on time.
- To make sure that the child fully understands the importance of attending school.
- To let the school know by 9.00am, the reason why their child is not attending school.
- To inform the school well in advance of any future absence such as major family events/holidays.
- To take family holidays during school holidays.
- To make dental and medical appointments out of school hours.
- To work with the school if absence or lateness becomes a problem and work in conjunction with the school to put this right.
- To co-operate with the Education Welfare Officer if they become involved, in the best interest of the child, ensuring uninterrupted education.

The parent will be informed of their responsibilities in the welcome pack provided when a child start school full time, and in the Home/School Agreement.

Celebrating and Rewarding Punctuality and Attendance

- ✓ Children with excellent attendance make more progress and have a greater chance of meeting their true potential.



- ✓ Golden tickets (non-uniform day prize) awarded to the class the highest attendance over 97%.
- ✓ Weekly attendance display in the school hall.
- ✓ Attendance celebrated in the school newsletter.
- ✓ Every term, 100% attendance badges given to each successful pupil.
- ✓ 98% target for whole school