

Shoreham Beach Primary School



Attendance Policy

Revised: February 2023
Next revision: February 2025

At Shoreham Beach Primary School we aim to provide all of our pupils with the maximum opportunities our curriculum provides. In order to do this we aim to maximise the attendance and punctuality of all of our pupils in partnership with their parents/carers. This policy sets out a framework of understanding agreed by staff and governors and shared with parents. It is also used at the Reception Parents Induction evening and issued in summary form as part of the Home School Agreement to all new parents.

Absence from Learning

There are only 190 days in the school year. This means that there are 175 non-school days left for holidays etc. Research has shown that children who are regularly taken out of school early in their school career will often become poor attendees in later years. Children who miss one day a fortnight will miss over a year's education by the time they are 16.

If a child is not at school we cannot teach them. Children who miss lessons are finding it harder and harder to catch up as the curriculum has become more and more demanding. We want every child to do their best; this coupled with a change in the law, means that we can only authorise absence very rarely. We hope you understand the importance of good attendance and give your child every opportunity to attend school and enjoy their education.

County use a 'traffic light' system for easy reference on absence rates. Individuals and the school are measured and banded by the following system:

Red	unsatisfactory	below 90%
Amber	needs to improve	90% to 95%
Green	good	96% and above

The Department for Education have informed schools that amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **The amendments make clear that from 2013 Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

We have worked with parents to build honest relationships and parents do approach the school to discuss absence requests. We do require that parents complete Request for Absence Forms for all absences other than funerals or illness, even though they know it will not be authorised.

If you decide to allow your child to be absent without authorisation this will be recorded as unauthorised absence. Ten or more unauthorised absences (5 or more days) in any ten week period will incur a fixed penalty notice of £120 per parent per child.



Local Headteachers have agreed that the following may be authorised at their discretion:

- An organised educational course (including visits to other schools).
- An organised exam, sports competition or approved public performance provided the production company has the appropriate licence.
- Medical and/or Dental appointments. (However, please make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day whenever possible.)
- Illness, sickness and treatments - although frequent medical absences may be challenged.
- Funerals (one day only) and bereavement.
- Weddings (one day only). Absence for wedding anniversaries or travel to weddings cannot be authorized.)
- Days of religious observance.

Headteachers will not authorise absence for:

- Shopping trips, birthdays treats, days out or to visit relatives.
- Extra days tagged onto weekends throughout the year.
- Days when a child could have come in late rather than not at all.
- Holidays – unless there are “exceptional circumstances.”

Schools are unable to grant leave of absence (e.g. holidays) during term time unless there are “exceptional circumstances”. Headteachers have agreed that the following may be considered as “exceptional circumstances”:

- a) Children with a parent on leave from the armed forces.
- b) Holiday for recently adopted children or children in care.
- c) Holiday for parents who work in the emergency services and who have had their leave cancelled (recent examples include leave cancelled because of fracking protests and the Queen’s Jubilee.)

The following will NOT normally be deemed as “exceptional circumstances”:

- a) Financial circumstances or reasons.
- b) Shift work (including that for the emergency services and NHS) or work commitments.
- c) Tours or trips with performing arts groups and sports clubs.
- d) Non-school based sports training or tournaments.

School's role in achieving good attendance

The school will strive to:-

- Provide a high quality curriculum so that pupils enjoy learning and want to come to school
- Provide for the needs of all pupils, offering an inclusive environment where all can achieve success
- Follow up all unexplained absences with parents
- Ensure pupils experiencing difficulty are supported pastorally

The staff and Governors at Shoreham Beach Primary School recognise that young children are often ill and occasionally persistent and recurrent bouts of ill health prevent them from attending school. We encourage parents to ensure that the child is fully recovered before returning to school. In the case of extended periods of illness we will work with the parents to provide extra support for their child's learning and confidence upon return to school.

Parents' role in achieving good attendance

- Notify the school by telephone the first morning of any absence
- Make non-urgent Doctor and Dentist appointments out of school time
- Make an appointment to see the Headteacher regarding any term-time absence.
- Ensure that their child arrives on time at school
- Talk with class teachers if there are any behavioural issues which could potentially affect the attendance of their child

Register procedures

- Registers are completed electronically, directly into Bromcom once the gates have closed at 8:50am. Office staff check the registers, and where they have received a telephone call giving a reason for the absence, complete absence codes. Where no reason has been received, contact telephone calls are made to establish the whereabouts of the child. **These calls will be made by 9am on the first day of absence.**

Monitoring of attendance

Attendance below 90% in any half term is cause for concern and is referred to the Headteacher and deputy Headteacher who may ask to meet with parents to discuss the reasons if the reasons for absence are unclear.

West Sussex Educational Welfare Office monitors children's attendance and will support families and the school if it needs to improve.