



## **Attendance Protocol**

### **AIM**

The Sittingbourne School aims to encourage every student to achieve the highest possible level of attendance to take full advantage of the learning opportunities available to them. We recognise the very strong link that exists between a student's level of attendance and their achievement. This link is shared with students and parents at every opportunity.

**We aim for 100% and ask for 96% as a minimum.**

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Attend all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
- Where there are difficulties, support will be offered from Pastoral Support Managers, the Attendance Officer, Wellbeing team and South Eastern Attendance Advisory Service (SEAAS).

#### **Parent/Carer Responsibilities:**

- Ensure their child attends school regularly, on time and properly equipped for learning.
- Notify the school promptly if their child cannot attend and any absence will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation/medical evidence is received.
- Parents are discouraged from making medical/dental appointments during school time, if possible, and only expected to remove their child from school for the minimum period of time when this is unavoidable.
- Refrain from taking holidays during term time.

#### **School Responsibility:**

- The Attendance Team/Community Team will contact parents for each absence.
- Attendance Team closely monitors the attendance of each student identifying those who fall below 96%.
- The school employs a whole range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and reward students when appropriate.



## Improving Attendance

- Contact is made on the day of absences as a support strategy to encourage students to attend the next day.
- Text messages are sent where no contact has been made. Parents are expected to respond to this message.
- Letters are sent out when attendance is becoming a concern.
- Home visits
- Attendance Meetings
- Referrals to SEAAS

## Registration

- Registration takes place at 08.40am (period 1) and 12.10pm (period 4).
- If a student fails to arrive before registers have closed, he/she should report to Reception or Attendance Office to sign in. The register entry will read 'late'.
- Arrival more than 20 minutes after registers have closed without an acceptable reason can result in a student being marked as unauthorised.
- In the instance where a bus is late, it is an expectation that students must sign in to the Attendance Office to avoid a late mark.

## Absences Due To Illnesses

- When your child is unwell, it is an expectation to inform the school on the morning of each day's absence.
- All contact should be made by phoning the Attendance office number on 01795 472449 Ext 1, emailing [TSS-Attendance@Swale.at](mailto:TSS-Attendance@Swale.at), message Attendance using the Edulink App.

The Sittingbourne School will only authorise **5 days of illness per academic year** provided contact has been made and deemed acceptable. All further absences will be unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided. **Please note the following are acceptable as medical evidence; appointment card, letter, sick note, appointment text or prescribed medication.**

The Sittingbourne School understands the difficulty of obtaining same-day GP appointments, however there are a number of walk-in clinics who provide confirmation of emergency appointments. Symptoms such as headaches, we advise your child taking suitable medication in the morning and attend school. We are unwilling to authorise a whole day's absence due to a 'headache' or feeling 'generally unwell'.



## **Holidays**

Parents are clearly told by the school that the Headteacher will only authorise a family holiday during term time in exceptional circumstances. Parents must apply through the Leave of Absence form on the website to take a student out of school for a holiday. The Attendance Team will notify the parent in writing of this decision to refuse/grant permission and will code accordingly. Parents who disregard this and still take their child on holiday will receive a letter informing them of a request for a penalty notice and to ask them to ensure their child has good attendance for the rest of the year (minimum 96%).

## **Strategies for Promoting Good Attendance**

1. The Sittingbourne School will provide an environment in which students feel safe, valued and welcome. Our ethos must demonstrate that students feel their presence is important and that it is vital for their achievement and progress. Students need to know they will be missed and any absence will be followed up by their relevant community or the Attendance Team.
2. Students who feel vulnerable and experience difficulties attending class or have friendship problems will be supported and given strategies to help them cope. The Pastoral Managers will be a key member of staff involved liaising with their teachers.
3. A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all students. Special provision will be made for identified students and a mentoring scheme exists to promote confidence and well-being.
4. A clearly defined and consistent approach to positive behaviour management exists to provide a fair system and support for all students, especially those who have difficulties; focusing on rewarding the positive.
5. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to students' needs and support is available whenever possible.
6. Attendance data will be produced and monitored regularly and analysed in order to identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievements and support.
7. High attendance will be recognised and awarded regularly.
8. Students whose attendance is a cause for concern will be monitored closely and discussed in weekly meetings.
9. Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, letters home, text messages, SEAAS, Edulink messages etc.) of the importance of regular attendance.
10. Students who have been absent for an extended period of time, or who are experiencing serious attendance problems, will have individually tailored programmes to support them.
11. School staff will liaise with other services/agencies that may assist students who are experiencing difficulties.
12. Pastoral Managers, SENCo, the Attendance Officer, SEAAS attendance officer and Assistant Headteacher will have regular meetings where attendance issues are discussed.
13. The Assistant Headteacher will report to the Governing body at least every second term on attendance matters.



## SEAAS Involvement

The school employs an external company, SEAAS, for two days a week to monitor absences. Weekly meetings take place and students causing concern are discussed and referred for follow-up action when the school requires intervention and support.

SEAAS Contact – Mrs Tina Morris -

Type of illness	NHS recommended period to be kept away from school	NHS further advice/comments
Diarrhoea or vomiting	24-48 hours since last episode	This may vary in each case, please contact school for further advice
Flu	Until recovered	
Whooping cough	Five days from commencement of antibiotic or 21 days from onset if no antibiotic treatment.	After treatment non-infectious coughing may continue for many weeks. Vaccination is available
Conjunctivitis	None	
Head lice	None if the hair has been treated	Recommend use of proprietary hair conditioner combed through the hair with a nit comb
Mumps	Five days from the onset of swelling (vaccination)	Mumps in teenage children can cause other serious medical complications
Thread worms	None	Treatment is required for the child and household contacts
Tonsillitis	None	There are many causes, most are due to viruses and do not need antibiotics
Chicken pox	Five days from onset of rash or until spots are crusted over- common March to May	Chicken pox can effect pregnant women if they have not already had the infection- please call school
Cold sores	None	Avoid contact with the sores
German measles	Five days from the onset of the rash can be vaccinated against	If pregnant women or children under 13 months come into contact with German measles they should inform their GP immediately. Please call school
Hand, foot and mouth	None	
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotics	Antibiotics can speed the healing process and reduce the infectious period
Measles	Four days from the onset of rash	If a pregnant woman comes into contact with German measles she should inform her GP immediately. Please call school
Slapped cheek	None- most cases are caught late winter- early spring	Pregnant women, people with weak immune systems or blood disorders who come into contact with slapped cheek should contact their GP. Please call school
Warts and Verrucae	None	Verrucae should be covered in swimming pools, gyms and changing rooms