



Sidcot
Live Adventurously

Policy Name: Attendance Register Policy

Number: 6.3

Date: 1 September 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 At Sidcot we see education as a partnership between the family and the School. The School is committed to providing the highest quality of education for students and we look to parents and guardians to support this objective.

1.2 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the School is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage children to attend. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards the School. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

2. Scope and Distribution

2.1 This policy applies to all children attending the Junior and Senior School of compulsory school age. This starts at the beginning of the term after that in which the child becomes 5 and ends on the last Friday of June in the school year in which the student becomes 16.

2.2 It also applies to children falling within the participation age range. Students starting year 11 or below in September 2013 will need to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday.

2.3 Children attending the nursery setting are not included in this policy, however, parents are encouraged to facilitate their children's consistent attendance to support their learning, social skills and preparation for school.

2.4 Sixth form students are also expected to attend school on a full-time basis.

2.5 This policy is available on the School's public website and on the staff intranet. It is also available in hard copy form and in accessible formats upon request.

3. Promoting Equality

3.1 The School is active in its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics including race, religion or belief, gender and gender reassignment, sexual orientation, disability or special educational need.

3.2 The School will also make the best provision it can for those enrolled children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school temporarily.

4. The Attendance Register

4.1 All students must be registered on the attendance register by law.

4.2 In the Senior School the Form Tutor takes the attendance register for the am registration and the pm register will be taken at the start of period 6 by the class teacher of at a designated place in the library for 6th form students not in lessons. In the Junior School and Nursery this task is undertaken by the Class Teacher.

5. Parents' Responsibilities

5.1 For the purposes of this policy, in accordance with Education Law, references to a parent include:

5.1.1 All natural parents, whether they are married or not.

5.1.2 Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and

5.1.3 Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

5.2 Parents must ensure that their children:

5.2.1 Attend regularly.

5.2.2 Arrive at school on time – 8.30am for the Senior and Junior School, and between 8.30am and 9am for the Nursery.

5.2.3 Are properly dressed and have all that they need as per the uniform lists on the internet or as advised for any particular activity.

5.2.4 Are in a fit condition to learn.

5.2.5 Keep the School informed of all absences whether planned or unplanned.

5.3 Parents should submit requests for planned absences in accordance with this policy. Parents who wish to request leave of absence for their child/ren during term time must request this in writing from the tutor (and for boarding Students their Housemaster or Housemistress). The request should include all details of the absences and explain the reasons for the requested absence. If holiday is not requested at least two weeks prior to absence, the request may be refused, and the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

5.4 Tutors, Heads of Year and Housemasters/mistresses will highlight any pertinent information related to the absence to the Head in order for him/her to approve or deny the request.

5.5 Whilst it is the legal duty of a parent to ensure their child's regular attendance at school, it may be that in the case of overseas boarding students that the student's guardian is contacted and involved in discussions with the School in the first instance. The student's parents will also be notified of the issues.

5.6 Educational guardians are unlikely to share parental responsibility for the child, but may have certain functions delegated to them by the parents. Educational guardians will be covered by the provisions of this policy, when caring for a student.

6. Approval of Absence

6.1 Only the School can approve absence, not parents. The School does not have to accept the parents' offered explanation as a valid reason for absence.

7. Authorised Absence

7.1 An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the School has received notification from parents. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parents' email or telephone the School to explain the absence.

8. Unauthorised Absence

8.1 An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school and the school has not given permission for the absence. If there are doubts about the reason offered, if the reason for the absence is not acceptable, or if no reason is given, any absence will be treated as unauthorised.

9. Long Term Illness and Disability

9.1 If the School is satisfied that a child is absent as a result of illness, the absence will be treated as authorised. Children who experience long term absences are supported by the School both during and after the absence through direct contact with parents.

9.2 The School may ask parents to seek a report or other evidence from a health professional to provide further information regarding the nature of the illness and a possible date for return to school.

9.3 The School adopts and implements its policy around supporting students with medical conditions and disabilities.

9.4 The school work with a number of agencies to support the mental health and wellbeing of students. Referrals can be triaged through Rose Cottage

Rose Cottage is the wellbeing hub of the school. We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Staff within Rose will lead and work with other staff to promote positive mental health, provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates when necessary. Rose Cottage will keep staff up-to-date with information about what support is available. The wellbeing lead liaises with the HOY and Tutors on teaching about mental health. Rose Cottage is the first point of contact for access to mental health support in school and communicates with mental health services and other external agencies when required. Rose Cottage staff will lead on and makes referrals to specialist services such as CAMHS.

10. Recording Absences - Senior School

10.1 It is the parents' responsibility to report absence from the first day of absence. Parents may either phone the absence line, leaving a message on the answer phone (01934 845245), or email a message to absence@sidcot.org.uk. Parents should copy the tutor into this email and should not send the absence email to the tutor only- all absences should be reported directly to the absence line/email. This message should be received by the School by 9am under all usual circumstances. If the child is ill then the School should be notified of the nature of the illness, and if possible, the expected date of return. If there is no clearly identifiable period of illness, (for example an incubation period, or advice from a medical practitioner) then parents are expected to report the absence daily.

10.2 All attendance, including absences and lateness, are recorded on SIMS (the School's information management system) by the relevant staff (Form Tutors, Attendance Lead, Reception). Entries are made at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and are updated during the school day. Teachers also register students' lesson attendance by using Lesson Monitor on SIMS. In the event of an absent student during their lesson, where a student had been registered by their Form tutor in either the morning or the afternoon registration, class teachers will contact the Attendance Lead and lesson absence team by email at the earliest opportunity. The Attendance Lead will then check the Wellbeing Hub, Health Centre via Patient Tracker, Music department lesson planner, Head of Year or Senior Management Team to ascertain the whereabouts of the student. The signing in/out books in Reception will

also be checked.

10.3 All absences are registered as authorised or unauthorised and the School uses a set of Local Educational Authority (LEA) codes, Appendix 1, to classify the absences. It is important that these codes are used consistently. Instructions for marking the register and the list of codes may be found on SIMS.

11. Reporting Absences - Junior School

11.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the SIMS register. The School Office has access to the register and will endeavour to contact the parents.

12. Boarding Students

12.1 If a boarder is absent from school for an authorised reason e.g. interview, medical appointment etc, boarding staff will inform the tutor and the absence line/email who will mark the register accordingly.

12.2 If a boarding student is unwell and not able to attend school, the Health Centre will update the Patient Tracker and the register will be coded accordingly. The Student will remain in the Health Centre if necessary or return to the Boarding House if supervision is available. On occasion, it may be necessary to ask the boarding student's guardian or parents to care for them away from school. Please refer to medical policy.

13. Unexplained Absences

13.1 The Junior School Office or Senior School Attendance Lead will telephone the parents on the first day of an absence, if no contact has been made with the School.

13.2 If parents fail to notify the School of the reason for their child's absence, it is the School's responsibility to investigate the reason for the absence.

13.3 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the Class Teacher should take immediate action by notifying the Attendance Lead and lesson absence team. The School will then be in contact straight away with the parents, in order to check on the safety of the child.

13.4 When a child returns to school after an absence, a written explanation must be provided by the parents, if parents have not previously communicated with the School (via phone or email). In the absence of an explanation from the parents, the Form Tutor will inform the Attendance Lead who will then contact the parents by telephone to request a written explanation for the reason for absence. SIMS will be updated accordingly

14. Lateness

14.1 Lateness is strongly discouraged as it is disruptive to the learning process in class. If a child arrives at school after registration, they must sign in at the Reception of the Junior School or the Senior School as appropriate.

14.2 The back door to the Nursery is locked at 9am and access must be gained via the Junior School Reception.

14.3 If a child is persistently late, their parents will be asked for an explanation and in some circumstances, parents/guardians will be asked to attend a TAF or TAC (team

around the family / team around the child) by the School to discuss concerns and work collectively to find solutions to poor punctuality and attendance.

15. Repeated Unauthorised Absences

15.1 If there is ongoing concern about a child's attendance, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), Pastoral Support & Attendance Lead, Safeguarding/Wellbeing Lead and/or Heads of Year (Senior School), or Junior Head in matters of Junior attendance will invite parents or guardians to a meeting to discuss problems.

15.2 The School will contact the parents of any child who has recurring unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents will be asked to visit the School and discuss the problem.

15.3 In addition to any Local Authority referral it may be that parents are requested to withdraw their child if they are not in agreement with the School's policy on attendance.

15.4 Repeated absences may also be indicative of child protection issues – please see below.

15.5. In appropriate cases, the behaviour policy will be invoked.

15.6 In the case of students who have the benefit of a Child Study Visa sponsorship, 10 days unauthorised absence will in most cases lead to a withdrawal of sponsorship.

15.7 It is expected that sponsored student's attendance will not drop below 80% or miss 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence. If any of the above occurs the school will assess the reasons behind this and if necessary the school will report this on the SMS as per the sponsor guidance.

15.8

15.9 Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation. Being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community. Further information and support includes guidance on school attendance; Working together to improve school attendance (DfE Sept 2022) and Children missing in education (DfE 2016) – see section 25.

16. Requests for Absence

16.1 Medical and dental appointments

16.1.1 Wherever possible, parents should try to make such appointments out of school time.

16.1.2 Parents should aim to give 24 hours' notice of a medical appointment during school time, preferably in writing through email communication to absence@sidcot.org.uk

16.1.3. When leaving school, all senior school students must 'sign out' in Reception and 'sign in' on return. Students must be collected by parents/guardians **in person** from Reception, the Health Centre or Rose Cottage Wellbeing Hub.

17. Holiday

17.1 Holidays in term time

17.1.1 The School has a discretionary power to grant leave for purposes including an annual family holiday. It is of course more educationally sound for such holidays to be taken during school holidays, and this is strongly encouraged. Where holidays of more than two weeks are planned, for example to visit overseas relatives, the School endeavours to discuss with parents the best timing for the trip from an educational point of view. Children must attend educational provision "regularly" in accordance with the law.

17.1.2 Parents are asked to request leave in writing. The Junior Head, or Head, as appropriate, will consider the application forms. 14 days' notice is required, as a minimum, under most circumstances. In some cases, requests that are made after this time period may be refused and be registered as unauthorised.

17.1.3 Parents will receive email communication from the School either agreeing that the absence will be authorised or classifying it as an unauthorised absence. Students who have acquired particularly low attendance throughout the academic year are more likely to have requests refused for authorisation. (approximately under 85%)

17.2 Other events

17.2.1 Parents should notify the School if they would like to request their child's absence for any other occasion. The School will consider each request on an individual basis. Requests should be sent to absence@sidcot.org.uk, tutor to be cc'd into email as addressee. Requests will then be sent to the relevant staff for authorisation.

18. Other Absence from the School Site during the day

18.1 With the exception of the students in years 12 and 13 (Sixth Form) who can leave the site at lunch and after school (signing in and out in reception),, students are not allowed to leave the site during the School Day, unless they have been given express permission by a member of staff, for a school trip or sporting fixture.

18.2 Study Leave is only ever granted to students in Years 11,12 and 13 for the purpose of sitting public examinations. Provision is made for those students who want to continue to come into school to revise.

18.3 Any student leaving the Senior School (with the exception of sixth form students) site during the school day must sign out at Reception and be collected from there **in person** by a parent/guardian. If permission is approved, students may also be collected from the Health Centre, or the Rose Cottage Wellbeing hub.

19. After School Procedures

19.1 Following the conclusion of the School Day, boarding students and many day students will still be on site to attend activities, prep, tea and so on. Junior School children may be booked into after-school care.

19.2 All students must book into after school activities on site using the Schools Buddy software. Students must also choose the leave school option if they are not staying on site after 4pm.

19.3 Please refer to the Supervision of Students Policy 2.10 for further details of supervision of students in these circumstances.

20. Child Protection

If a child is noted to be absent or missing from the School site, the missing children procedures (policies 1.2 and 1.2a) will be followed. A child going absent or missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Children who go absent or missing may be at potential risk of abuse including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, radicalisation, travel to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

20.1 If there are any such concerns, the child protection procedures will be invoked as per policy 2.1. All staff should be aware of this, noting the issue on 'CPOMS' where appropriate or liaising directly with the DSL or social care where appropriate.

20.2 Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues. Sidcot will respond to persistently absent pupils to prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education.

21. Liaison with the Local Authority and Other Agencies

21.1 The School will liaise with the local authority in cases where a student has ten or more consecutive days of unauthorised absence. In such instances, the School may request that an attendance contract be agreed upon and signed by the parents/guardians and the student.

21.2 The School must inform the local authority where the school is based (North Somerset Council) where a child's name is to be deleted on certain grounds; including where the child has been taken out of school to be home educated, where the family has apparently moved away or when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend, or has been permanently excluded. Please refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (2.1). The School will also inform the Local Authority where the child is normally resident by copying it into any correspondence.

21.3 The school has a significant number of students who study in the UK on a Child Study Visa. The school is likely to have to report any absence of 10 consecutive days or more unauthorised absence or if a student leaves the school to UKVI.

21.4 The school has a responsibility to comply with the statutory guidance provided by the Department of Education in '**Working Together to Improve School Attendance**' (August 2024). As outlined in this guidance, the school has a duty to notify the local authority of any student whose cumulative absence reaches 10% or more of absence, during the academic year, which equates to a minimum of one day of absence every fortnight. The school will collaborate with the local authority to provide targeted support and facilitate the re-engagement of students in their education.

21.5 For students whose absence reaches 50% across the academic year, further intensive support may be required, to include, consideration of an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan or alternative educational provisions based on the individual needs of the child. Should all avenues of support be exhausted and severe unauthorised absence persist, such circumstances may be regarded as neglect. In such cases, both the school and local authority will assess potential safeguarding concerns that may necessitate a children's social care assessment. For additional information regarding the statutory guidance, please refer to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2024).

21.6 Further to reporting 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence or a cumulative total of 10% unauthorised absence throughout the academic year, the school will liaise with the local authority in the event of the following attendance concerns:

- Fifteen consecutive days of absence due to emotional-based reasons.
- Students unable to attend school due to long-term emotional-based reasons will be required to maintain weekly visual contact with the school. This contact may occur in person or via Teams video call.
- Students who have accumulated 30 or more days of illness during the academic year, regardless of whether these days are consecutive.

22. North Somerset Council

The Local Authority has a number of statutory duties which include:

- Children Missing Education
- Elective Home Education
- Enforcement action in cases of persistent absence from school which include, issuing fixed penalty notices on behalf of schools, and also court prosecutions for non-attendance.
- Child performance licensing, child employment and chaperone licences.
- Alternative education provision.

23. Complaints

23.1 The School's complaints policy is available on the intranet, school website and in hard copy form upon request.

24. Monitoring and Review of this Policy

24.1 The School will keep and maintain accurate attendance records.

24.2 In the Junior School, class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they must contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Junior Head, who will contact the parents or guardian.

24.3 In the Senior School, Head's of Year, Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Pastoral Support and Attendance Lead, will identify significant patterns and trends. In appropriate cases (especially where a safeguarding or child protection concern exists), the Governors will be made aware of issues concerning attendance in reports to the Board. The Attendance Lead and relevant team members will invite parents/guardians in to meet if attendance does not improve after notification.

24.4 Attendance Contracts:

In instances where a student encounters barriers that affect their ability to attend school, resulting in declining attendance, the school may propose a temporary part-time timetable. This adjustment aims to alleviate pressure on the student while fostering an environment conducive to their educational growth. A review will be conducted at a predetermined date to assess the student's reintegration into school life and an increased timetable, with the goal of enhancing their academic experience.

During this period, it is anticipated that any challenges the student faces will be addressed

collaboratively among the school, the student, their parents or guardians, and, if necessary, relevant external organisations. Upon implementation of the part-time timetable, an attendance contract will be presented to the student and their parent or guardian. This contract will clearly outline the expectations associated with the part-time arrangement and will be signed by all three parties. A specific date for the contract's review will also be established.

Furthermore, a designated member of staff will be assigned to maintain weekly communication with both the student and their parent or guardian throughout the duration of the attendance contract, ensuring continuous support and monitoring of progress.

Example of Attendance contract can be found in the appendix.

24.5 This policy will be reviewed by the Attendance Lead and Deputy Head (Pastoral) annually, or sooner if major incident or change in guidance or statute dictate.

25 References

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
Children Missing Education – Dfe 2016
Working together to improve school attendance – DfE August 2024
School attendance – July 2019 Equality Act 2010
The Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS)
The Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1) (3) (4) & (6) and 458(4) & (5)
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, 2010 and 2011
The Education (Pupil Registration) (E regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
The (Education) Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2014
The ISI Commentary Handbook for the Inspection of Schools (September 2020)

26 Related Policies

1.2 Missing Child Policy and Procedure
1.2a Missing Child Policy and Procedure (Junior School)
1.4 Uncollected Child Procedure
2.1 Safeguarding and Child protection
2.6 Complaints procedure
2.10 Supervision of Students
2.10 a Supervision of Students (Junior School)
2.11 Equal Opportunities (children)
4.1 Medical Policy

- 4.2 Supporting students with medical conditions and disabilities
- 4.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing
- 5.1 Behaviour (Senior School)
- 5.1a Behaviour (Junior School)
- 5.11 Exclusions policy

27 Document Change History

Date of change	Detail significant changes and any new legislation / guidance taken into account
03.12.2016 Adopted by Board	Redraft of policy
07.10.2017	Reviewed by Board at Annual Safeguarding Review
16.04.2018	Reviewed and paragraph 10.2 updated to reflect the use of "Lesson Monitor"
20.02.2019	Reviewed – no changes required.
26.10.2019	Updated to reflect that MyConcern has replaced Flagit as the mechanism for staff to report safeguarding concerns.
06.03.2020	Definition of authorised absence reworded and obligations to report unauthorised absences to UKVI clarified.
10.10.2020	Insertion 2.5 For arrangements during a pandemic / online supported learning, please refer to the addendum to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

09.10.2021	<p>Changed references to EWO:</p> <p>13.2 If parents fail to notify the School of the reason for their child's absence, it is the School's responsibility to investigate the reason for the absence.</p> <p>22 North Somerset Council</p> <p>The local Authority has a number of statutory duties which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Missing Education • Elective Home Education • Enforcement action in cases of persistent absence from school which include, issuing fixed penalty notices on behalf of schools, and also court prosecutions for non-attendance. • Child performance licensing, child employment and chaperone licences. • Alternative education provision. <p>Appendix 2 - Contact Details</p>
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	<p>Somerset county Council are commissioned to work in partnership with North Somerset Council to deliver the above duties:</p> <p>ESS@somerset.gov.uk</p> <p>Parents and carers can contact North Somerset Council on a range of other matters which include school exclusions, SEND and other education issues on 01275 888801</p> <p>Reviewed and adopted by Board</p>
09.05.2022	Reviewed and amended in light of appointment of Pastoral and Attendance Lead. Appendix 3 added, Pupil Leave of Absence form
04.07.2023	Reviewed and amended by Pastoral Attendance Lead and Deputy Head (Pastoral). Appendix 4 added; 12-week attendance plan. New paragraphs added at 15.7 and 20.3 detailing the safeguarding risks of missing education. Removed references to Covid pandemic
1 September 2024	Absence and attendance codes updated and Policy reviewed
22 January 2025	Section 21.4 added to reference Working Together to

	Improve School Attendance'
1 September 2025	Appendix 4 – Twelve Week Attendance Plan removed. Appendix 4 now refers to EBSA Guidance. Appendix 5 added, Attendance Contract. Section 21.6 The school will notify the Local Authority for the following attendance concerns...24.4 Attendance Contracts – includes information on why and when they may be used. Amended by the Attendance Lead.

Appendix 1 – Absence and Attendance Codes

/	Present (AM)
	Present (PM)
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances
	C1 – Leave of absence – regulated performance or employment abroad
	C2 – Leave of absence – part time timetable
D	Dual registration
E	Suspended or excluded without alternative provision
F	Alternative lesson in school
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Late after registers closed - reason known
I	Illness
J1	Interview
K	Attending alternative provision arranged by LA
L	Late but arrived before the register closed
M	Medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Absence in other or unknown circumstances
P	Participating in a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend – lack of access arrangement
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave for public examinations
T	Travelling with parent for occupational purposes
U	Late and arrived after the register closed
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
X	Not required to attend – non compulsory age absence and sixth form home study
1	Rose Cottage (Wellbeing Hub)
2	Health Centre
Y1	Unable to attend – normal transport not available
Y2	Unable to attend – widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend – unavoidable partial closure
Y4	Unable to attend – unavoidable full closure
Y5	Unable to attend – criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend – public health guidance/law
Y7	Unable to attend – unavoidable other than Y1-Y6

Appendix 2 - Contact Details

Somerset County Council are commissioned to work in partnership with North Somerset Council to deliver the above duties:

ESS@somerset.gov.uk

Parents and carers can contact North Somerset Council on a range of other matters which include school exclusions, SEND and other education issues on 01275 888801

Appendix 3 – Pupil Leave of Absence Form

The Pupil leave of absence form is available in the Parent Handbook on Firefly at the page linked below:

<https://sidcot.fireflycloud.net/parent-handbook/getting-things-done/notifying-school-of-my-childs-absence-from-school-->

Appendix 4 – EBSA Guidance

Guidance and Procedures for Students Experiencing Emotional Based School Avoidance at Sidcot School

What is EBSA?

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) occurs when children and young people face significant challenges in attending school due to emotional factors, particularly anxiety. This struggle often leads to both emotional and physical discomfort, making school feel overwhelming. As attendance decreases, feelings of anxiety can increase, creating a cycle that makes it even harder to return to school.

Possible Cause?

The rise in Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) among school-age children may be attributed to several factors as outlined in ‘Emotionally-Based School Avoidance: Information and Guidance for Schools and Educational Settings – Somerset Educational Psychology Service’:

- To mitigate exposure to circumstances that may induce stress or anxiety, including academic pressures, social expectations, and specific aspects of the school environment. Impact of the Pandemic -

- The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted normal routines, leading to prolonged periods of isolation and remote learning. This change affected social skills and created anxiety about returning to in-person schooling.
- To avoid challenging social situations or the perception of being evaluated or judged by peers.
- To diminish separation anxiety or to elicit attention from important figures, such as parents or other family members.
- To seek out tangible reinforcements outside of the academic environment, such as shopping or engaging in video games during school hours.

Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative approach involving schools, families, and mental health professionals to provide the necessary support and resources for affected children. At Sidcot School, we want to work with you to support your children back into school. **What is the school's responsibility for students experiencing EBSA?**

In addressing the challenges associated with Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) that results in a sustained pattern of lower attendance over time, schools have several key responsibilities:

1. **Identification and Monitoring:** Schools proactively identify students who exhibit signs of EBSA and consistently monitor their attendance patterns. Early detection helps prevent issues from escalating. At Sidcot School, attendance levels are monitored by the Attendance Lead in the Senior School and the Head of the Junior School.
2. **Creating a Supportive Environment:** It is important for schools to foster a safe and supportive atmosphere where students feel comfortable discussing their emotional challenges and seeking assistance. Students know that there are various places they can turn for support and that Rose Cottage, the Wellbeing Hub, is a perfect welcoming space in the Senior School and in the Junior School pupils can be supported individually by their class teacher or Assistant Head Pastoral.
3. **Development of Individualised Support Plans:** Schools are responsible for creating tailored support plans for students experiencing EBSA. These plans may include a referral to the school counselling services, one to one pastoral support, mentoring schemes and / or adjustments to the school environment (for example seating plans and alternative areas to work). Flexible learning arrangements could be made to meet individual needs such as, work set to be completed at home via one note and regular tutor / teacher check ins. Key staff members will be assigned to monitor the success of the support plan.
4. **Collaboration with Families:** Engaging with parents and guardians is vital. Schools should maintain open lines of communication with families to understand the child's needs better and provide coordinated support. School staff will agree a communication

strategy with parents, for example weekly contact with child and / or parents. The school will agree a communication strategy with parents when they first meet to discuss their child.

5. **Access to Mental Health Services:** Schools should ensure that students have access to mental health resources, this may include referral to the school counsellor and/or wellbeing team, signposting or referral to external mental health professionals and organisations, to assist in managing anxiety and emotional difficulties. In the Senior School, this work takes place in Rose Cottage and in the Junior School this work is overseen by the Assistant Head Pastoral.
6. **Implementation of Flexible Attendance Policies:** Schools are encouraged to adopt flexible attendance policies that accommodate students struggling with EBSA. This may involve partial attendance (part-time timetable), remote learning options (via one note), or gradual reintegration into the school environment. These options will be discussed with parents to agree a strategy that works for their child.
7. **Staff Training and Development:** Schools should provide training to equip teachers and support staff with the skills necessary to recognise signs of emotional distress and respond appropriately.
8. **Promotion of Wellbeing Initiatives:** Schools should actively promote mental health and wellbeing initiatives to reduce stigma around seeking help and encourage students to prioritise their emotional health.

By fulfilling these responsibilities, schools can significantly contribute to supporting students experiencing EBSA, thereby facilitating their return to regular attendance.

Stages of Support

Stage 1: A concern is raised around long-term non-attendance due to high levels of anxiety/ mental health and wellbeing (EBSA).

Stage 2: A face-to-face parent meeting with school staff to discuss the concerns and agree on the following:

1. An individualised support plan
2. A communication strategy
3. To assign a key point of contact

Stage 3: Implementation of the support plan to include regular check ins with both the child and the parents. In the case of a child who finds it difficult to work with the school, we will work with parents and external providers to provide support to the student.

Stage 4: Ongoing review of the support plan. Adjustments made as required and discussed with the parents.

Reference Documents

[4 Key Strategies For Supporting Emotionally Based School Avoidance](#)

[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

[Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](#)

[Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#)

[Emotionally-Based School Avoidance \(EBSA\)_ Training for Schools \(1\).pdf](#)

[Accepting Behaviour Ltd](#)

[Emotionally Based School Avoidance: Information and Guidance for Schools and Educational Settings](#)

Appendix 5 – Part-time timetable contract

School Attendance Contract for Part-Time Timetable

Student Name:

Year Group:

Date:

Purpose of the Contract:

This contract aims to support students on a part-time timetable by outlining expectations, while recognising their unique challenges. We are committed to fostering a positive and nurturing environment to help students succeed academically and personally.

Attendance Requirements:

1. Scheduled Days/Times:

The student will attend school on the following days/times:

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

2. Punctuality:

We encourage the student to arrive on time for all classes. If difficulties arise, please communicate with us so we can provide support.

3. Attendance Tracking:

We ask that any absences be communicated to the school as soon as possible.

Support and Resources:

1. Emotional and Academic Support:

The school is here to support the student's emotional and academic needs. The student is encouraged to reach out to staff for help with coursework or any challenges they may be facing.

2. Flexible Adjustments:

If the student needs to adjust their schedule or requires additional support, we welcome open communication to explore options that work best.

3. Wellness Check-Ins:

Regular check-ins will be scheduled to discuss the student's well-being and progress. We want to ensure they feel supported and heard. A key member of staff will be assigned to you.

Key staff member:

Email:

Commitment to Success:

1. Active Participation:

The student is encouraged to engage fully in their classes and make use of available resources.

2. Goal Setting:

Together, we can set realistic attendance goals to help the student feel a sense of accomplishment, inclusion and to improve attendance.

Consequences for Non-Compliance:

If the terms of this contract are not met, we will work collaboratively with the student and guardian/parents to identify solutions. Our goal is to support the student to improve personal wellbeing and academic achievement.

Other comments:

Start date:

Review Date:

Signatures:

By signing below, the student and guardian acknowledge that they have read and understood the terms of this supportive attendance contract and agree to work together towards the student's success.

Student Signature:

Date:

Guardian/Parent Name(s)

.....

Guardian/Parent Signature(s)

.....

Date:

School Representative Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: