



Sidcot
Live Adventurously

Policy Name: Attendance Register Policy

Policy Number: 6.3

Date: July 2023

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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. 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 complete the Pupil Leave of Absence form (Appendix 3) and return to the form tutor at least two weeks prior to the 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 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.

5.4 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 is 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 coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health, provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates, and 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. Parents may either phone the absence line, leaving a message on the answer phone, or email a message to absence@sidcot.org.uk. Parents should copy the tutor in to 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) or Head (Senior School), or Junior Head will invite parents or guardians (where the student's parents live overseas or a substantial distance from the School), to a meeting to discuss problems, prior to making a referral to the Local Authority.

15.2 The School will contact the parents of any child who has an 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 Ultimately, 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 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 complete a Leave of Absence form. 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.

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), 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 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

20.1 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.

20.2 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 "My Concern" where appropriate or liaising directly with the DSL or social care where appropriate.

20.3 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.

20.4 When a student's attendance reaches concerning levels (70% and below), the school will invoke a twelve-week attendance plan. Please refer to Appendix 4.

21. Liaison with the Local Authority and Other Agencies

21.1 The School is under a legal duty to report certain attendance issues to the Local Authority. Where a student has 10 days or more of consecutive unauthorised absence, we would ask that parents/guardians work with an independent Education Welfare Office (chargeable service)

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.

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, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Pastoral Support and Attendance Lead, 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.

24.4 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 Sept 2022
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
2.10a 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	<p>Insertion</p> <p>2.5 For arrangements during a pandemic / online supported learning, please refer to the addendum to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.</p>
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> <p>Somerset county Council are commissioned to work in partnership with North Somerset Council to deliver the above duties:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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.

Appendix 1 – Absence and Attendance Codes

/	Present (AM)
	Present (PM)
B	Educated off-site (not dual registration)
C	Other approved educational activity (not covered by other codes and descriptions)
D	Undefined
E	Excluded
F	Agreed extended family holiday
H	Agreed family holiday
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late but arrived before the register closed
M	Medical or dental appointment
N	No reason for the absence provided yet
O	Other unauthorised (not covered by other codes or descriptions)
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late and arrived after the register closed
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience (not work based training)
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age students

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 – Twelve-week attendance plan

Twelve-week attendance plan (70% and below)

If a student's attendance falls to 70% and below, the twelve-week attendance plan will be used as a SMART method of reintroducing students into full time education. This is not applicable to students whose attendance has dropped due to ongoing medical issues or extenuating circumstances.



TAF meeting – family invited to meet with school and informed of twelve-week reintroduction program. 4 weeks reduced timetable agreed with pastoral team. Core subjects to be included.

(Team around the family meeting or TAF involves parents/guardians meeting with school representatives such as members of the pastoral team to discuss concerns regarding student and form strategies collectively to improve the situation)

TAF meeting requirements met.



A review meeting will take place after 4 academic weeks.
If the student has met 100% attendance of the reduced timetable (allowance made for illness and/or medical appointments) the timetable will be increased by 10-20%.



A review meeting will take place after 4 academic weeks.
If the student has met 100% attendance of the reduced timetable (allowance made for illness and/or medical appointments) the timetable will be increased to a 90-100% timetable for a further 4 weeks.



A review meeting will take place after 4 academic weeks.
If the student has met 100% attendance of the reduced timetable (allowance made for illness and/or medical appointments) students will be expected to follow their full timetable – attendance to be monitored.

If attendance drops to concerning levels again. School may decide that needs cannot be met, alternative education provision needed. The 12-week program cannot be repeated.

TAF meeting requirements not met.



A review meeting will take place after 4 academic weeks.
If the student has not met the requirements of the reduced timetable (allowance made for illness and/or medical appointments) parents will be asked to work with EWO (Education Welfare Officer – chargeable service), safeguarding concerns will be discussed and evaluated, and the student will be required to complete 4 more weeks on the reduced timetable.



A review meeting will take place after 4 academic weeks.
If the student has not met the requirements of the reduced timetable (allowance made for illness and/or medical appointments), staff will consider how well the student has engaged with the EWO.
Parents and staff will consider whether Sidcot is the correct education provision if needs cannot be met.
The student may be given a final opportunity to continue with a reduced timetable if there has been positive engagement with EWO.



A review meeting will take place after 4 academic weeks.
If a student has been given the opportunity to proceed on an agreed timetable for the final four weeks but has not met the requirements of the reduced timetable (allowance made for illness and/or medical appointments), Sidcot will not be able to meet child's needs and a more suitable educational provision will be needed.

