



Date reviewed: Autumn 2022

To be reviewed: Autumn 2024 (*unless interim guidance from Suffolk CC or DFE received*)

Approval by Headteacher

Signature of Chair of Governors:

Introduction

Sebert Wood Community Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. There is clear evidence of a link between good attendance at school and high levels of attainment. Only by attending school every day possible and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. The whole school community – pupils, parents/carers, school staff and governors - have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance. This policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance/statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the school community know of the policy and have access to it.

School's roles and responsibilities

All staff at Sebert Wood have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. Staff will work together to provide an environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will lead the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance ensuring that the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The Attendance Officer will be appropriately trained to ensure that up-to-date attendance data and attendance issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team as soon as a trigger point is reached or earlier where there are other concerns. The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that support is put in place to deal with any attendance issues. The Attendance Officer will also meet with the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer and share information with them regarding any concerns about a pupil's attendance. Attendance information and reports will be prepared by the Attendance Officer. Information on attendance will be made readily available to staff and parents/carers. Attendance reports will be made available to the Governing Body each term.

Registration and Punctuality

- The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session.
- The register will close 15 minutes after the class scheduled arrival time. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will be counted as **absent (Unauthorised)**. Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be marked **Late**.
- Late arrivals must report to the school office in order for the staff to ascertain the child's lunch requirements and to sign the children in.

InTouch Unexplained Absence Management and First-day calling

Sebert Wood Primary School has in place a system of unexplained absence management and 'first-day calling'. This means if a child is absent with no reason provided the Attendance Officer will be initially

send an InTouch email message to priority 1 and 2 contacts holding Parental Responsibility for the child asking for a reason for the child's absence, if we have not had a response we will then try to telephone you. This phone call will be made by **10.00am**.

Requests for Leave of Absence

Requests for leave of absence during term time must be made on the appropriate form by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides. Any further evidence supporting the application may be attached to the form. The application must be made well **in advance** of the intended absence. Regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval therefore if parents/carers do not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised. All requests will be considered on an individual case by case basis.

Sebert Wood Community Primary School will NOT authorise time off school during periods of national tests, i.e. SATS examinations.

Sebert Wood Community Primary School will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing giving their decision as to whether the absence will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised. Each request is considered on its merits and for data protection purposes is considered as a confidential matter. The school will only discuss each individual case with the applicant alone.

Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice is a fine issued to parents by the county council where a child has had unauthorised absence from school.

A Penalty Notice referral to the local authority may be made where a child has had their 8th unauthorised session within an academic year. ***Please note that there are 2 sessions per school day, therefore 8 sessions equates to 4 days unauthorised absence in an academic year this can be made up of Unauthorised late marks, absences with no reason provided and unauthorised holidays.***

Second term time holidays taken in an academic year (when a Penalty Notice Fine for the first holiday has already been issued), can be referred to the Local Authority for Final Notice and legal action as soon as the 2nd term time holiday has occurred.

Parents'/carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring that children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents/carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child). Parents/carers will be supported and encouraged by Sebert Wood Community Primary School to ensure good attendance for their child.

Sebert Wood Community Primary School expects parents/carers:

- To ensure that their child attends the school regularly;
- To support their child's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- To understand that the school are unable to automatically agree requests for absence;
- To not condone unjustified absence from school.

Parents/carers will also be expected:

- To notify Sebert Wood Community Primary School on every day of their child's absence using the school line 01284 755211 or email admin@sebertwood.co.uk. This phone call/email should be made/sent by 9.00am.
- Written confirmation of periods of absence may be requested by the Attendance Officer

- To ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- To work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- To contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their child's well-being where it relates to attendance. Sebert Wood Community Primary School will endeavour to support parents/carers to address their concerns.
- To maintain confidentiality and not to discuss an individual case with other parents.

What will happen if my child's attendance level falls?

The school monitors the attendance rate of all children as requested by the LA, SCC. Where a child's attendance rate is considered too low, the LA, SCC requires the school to take intervention action:

Attendance rate falls below 95% - A letter may be sent home from the school to inform the parent(s)/carer(s) that their child's attendance level requires improvement and the child's attendance will continue to be closely monitored.

Attendance rate falls to 93% - A letter may be sent home from the school to inform the parent(s)/carer(s) that the school are unable to authorise any further absences unless satisfactory medical evidence is provided to the school.

Attendance rate falls to 90% – You will receive a letter and a meeting may be arranged with the parent(s)/carer(s) at the school to discuss attendance and support that the school can offer. A referral to the Educational Welfare Officer may be made.

Pupils' Responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult.

Pupils should attend all of their lessons on time, ready to learn. Pupils also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

Governors' responsibilities

The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Conclusion

Regular school attendance contributes to the health and safety of children and supports children in reaching their maximum potential. Being a member of a school community builds confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute and to be responsible for the well-being of others. Good school attendance supports engagement in further education, employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling life-style.

Reviewing the policy

The Headteacher will review this policy every 2 years or according to any changes nationally (DfE).



Application for Leave of Absence during term time (Please note all applications **MUST** be made in advance).

Child's Name:		Child's Class:	
----------------------	--	-----------------------	--

I would like to apply for a leave of absence for my child from:(Date)

The reason(s) for this request are:

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

I am/am not (please delete as applicable) attaching further evidence in support of this application.

Should this leave of absence be granted my child would return to school on: (Date)

Details of Siblings:

If you have other children currently attending school please complete their details below.

Child's Name	Child's Age	Name of Child's School

I understand that:

- The Headteacher will consider this application based solely on the information provided on this form and on any further evidence that I have attached.
- I may be requested to provide further information to the school.
- I will be notified in writing whether this proposed absence would be recorded as authorised or unauthorised on my child's attendance record.
- A Penalty Notice referral to the local authority may be made **where a child has had their 8th unauthorised session within an academic year. Please note that there are 2 sessions per school day, therefore 8 sessions equates to 4 days unauthorised absence in an academic year.** A Penalty Notice is a fine issued to parents by the county council where a child has had unauthorised absence from school.

I confirm that I am the parent/carer of the child detailed above and that my child normally resides with me.

Signed:

Print Name:

Date: