



SEAFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Seaford Primary School by

- ❖ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ❖ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- ❖ ***parents keeping children off school unnecessarily***
- ❖ ***truancy before or during the school day***
- ❖ ***absences which have never been properly explained***
- ❖ ***continuous illness- where medical evidence has been requested but not produced***
- ❖ ***children who arrive at school after the close of register, the register time each morning is between 8.55 and 9.15 am***



Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Local Education Authority. The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- The school makes first day absence contact to establish reason for absence if parent does not notify by 10.00am
- Absence forms are completed by parents wishing to remove children in term time.
- No holidays in term time are authorised in line with ESCS policy, see one.
- Authorised absence is granted for exceptional compassionate grounds e.g. close family bereavement. See below.
- If a child's attendance falls below 85% a letter is sent out to parents to inform them of the fact and request that attendance rate is improved. (The EWO also receives a copy of this letter)

Seaford Primary School will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

See school improvement plan.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Jon Reynard HT

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

June 2005, reviewed November 2009