



South Gloucestershire and Stroud Academy Trust (SGSAT)

SGS Pegasus Attendance policy

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Please contact the SGS-GS Human Resources Department

Policy and Procedure Prepared by:	Sara Goldhawk/Kate East
Job Title/Role:	Headteacher/Chair of Governors
Policy and Procedure Ref. No.: Q/P	Version Date: November 2017 Review Date: April 2019 (Subject to any legislative changes) Upload to SGSAT website? Yes
Approved by:	SGS Pegasus Free School LGB
Date:	20 November 2018

Mandatory Initial Equality and Diversity Impact Screening

Main aim and purpose of the policy:	To set out the range of activities that organisations are permitted to charge parents and carers of students in the SGSAT establishments and the circumstances whereby parents and carers will be considered for the refund or omission of those charges.				
Is this policy (or its constituent parts) relevant to a general equality duty? (please tick)	This policy development will assist in the elimination of unlawful discrimination and/or harassment of identified Groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote equal opportunities for identified Groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote positive attitudes and participation between Groups?	Implementation of this policy will promote good relations between Groups?	
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race or Ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy/ Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Carers/ Care givers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Persons in care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Specify any Groups for which there is evidence or reason to believe that some Groups or individuals could be affected differently:					
None					
How much evidence is there:	None	A little	Some	A lot	
Is there any concern that the policy may operate in a discriminatory way?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	None	A little	Some	A lot	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Assessed relevance to equality (tick one row only)	High	Med	Low	None	Brief reason for this assessment
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race or Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy/ Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Carers/ Care givers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
What is the next step? (tick one only)	What priority level is this policy?		Has the Policy been sent for Full EQIA, or do you believe the policy should have a Full EQIA?		
	High <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out on this policy/procedure and a full Impact Assessment is not required					
Completed by: Sara Goldhawk		Position: Head Teacher		Date: 15.10.17	

Attendance policy

1. Introduction

This policy has been created in order for SGS Pegasus School to meet its statutory and legislative obligations regarding attendance. The purpose of this policy is for SGS Pegasus School to have a clear policy that is understood and accepted by parent/carers and pupils. It provides a sound basis for ensuring that children and young people attend school regularly and that absences are robustly monitored.

2. Rationale

At SGS Pegasus School we believe that all pupils benefit from the education we provide, and therefore from regular school attendance. In order to achieve this, we take appropriate action to ensure that all pupils achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted on as quickly as possible.

Regular school attendance is essential to ensure the best outcomes for our pupils. By `regular` our policy is that all pupils attend each and every day that they are expected to attend. There may be exceptional circumstances when absences may be agreed in line with national attendance code guidance.

3. Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all pupils
- To provide support, advice and guidance about attendance and punctuality to parent/carers and pupils.
- To be systematic in our approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To ensure positive and consistent communication about attendance and punctuality between home and school.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Officer and with other services and agencies.
- To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
- To deal with extenuating circumstances appropriately showing sensitivity and understanding

4. Parental Responsibility

- The school expects that parent/carers will:
 - Inform a member of staff of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.
 - Endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours.
 - Endeavour to take family holidays out of school hours.

5. Promoting Regular Attendance

- Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parent/carers, pupils and all members of school staff. We encourage attendance by:
 - Consistent, clear communication with parent/carers and pupils about the importance of regular, prompt, attendance
 - Giving parent/carers details on attendance in our newsletters
 - Discussing attendance with parent/carers at teacher meetings, with the current percentage attendance being reported
 - Reporting to parent/carers on their child's attendance within the annual school report
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6. School Responsibility

- The Head Teacher is responsible for attendance matters, supported by the class teachers and administrative staff
- Attendance is recorded and data stored and analysed using Arbor Attendance module. It is a statutory duty for class teachers to maintain accurate registers; these are legal documents. Class teachers are legally responsible for marking their register twice per day at the start of each session
- Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply. In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. Where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging, a meeting at school or a home visit is carried out to support parents/carers to work with school to help resolve the difficulties
- Where there is no response to school intervention and where the absence or pattern of absence has persisted without explanation, the school will refer to the Education Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) liaises with the school regarding absences following contact with the parent/carers

7. Types of absence

- Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.
- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as significant illness, medical/dental/therapeutic appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:
 - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
 - Absences which have never been properly explained
 - Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
 - Day trips and holidays in term time
- The education (pupil registration) (England) (amendment) regulations 2013 made clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional and/or unavoidable circumstances' exist. This policy has been written in line with DfE guidance issued in September 2018 – School attendance – Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities.
- "Exceptional" is defined as rare, significant, unavoidable and short. "Unavoidable" is an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time i.e after school or during holidays. Parent/carers are asked to arrange a time to meet with the Head Teacher to discuss a past or future absence they feel is exceptional and/or unavoidable.
- If an event can be scheduled outside of term time (or after the school day) i.e special occasion shopping/routine dental appointment, then it would not be described as an "exceptional, unavoidable circumstance" and can not be an authorised absence.
- Absence during term time for holidays are therefore not considered an exceptional, unavoidable circumstance.
- Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:
 - Significant illness
 - Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but we ask parent/carers to try to make these after school if at all possible)
 - Days of religious observance
 - Seeing a parent/carer who is on leave from the armed forces
 - External examinations
 - Bereavement/funeral

8. Recording attendance

- A register is taken at 9.15am and 1.15pm. This data is recorded on the Arbor Attendance module for the senior leadership team and governors to see. OFSTED will also examine our attendance rates when we are inspected.
- Parent/carers are asked to telephone the school before 9.15 am on the first day of absence, and then again on the 4th day (after 3 days of the absence) if illness continues.
- If we do not receive a telephone call, the child is entered in the register as absent and the office will telephone home to establish the reason. When the reason for absence has been established, the register is marked accordingly.
- The Head Teacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised
- If we do not receive a telephone call, school will contact parents/carers. If parents/carers can not be contacted, school will contact other emergency contacts until the whereabouts of the child and their well-being can be confirmed. If school are unable to contact anyone who can confirm the child is safe and well, the Education Welfare Support Team or the Local Authority Access and Response Team will be contacted for further investigation
- If a pupil has had an absence of 5 or more days, we will ask for information (i.e from the GP) for the Head Teacher to consider if the absence can be authorised. If a pupil has a medical appointment during school time (that can not be arranged after school or during the holidays), we will ask for a letter or medical appointment card for the Head Teacher to consider if the absence can be authorised

9. Monitoring attendance

- Each Friday, the Head Teacher will examine attendance for the week
- 100% attendance certificates are awarded in assembly to those pupils who have been an Attendance Hero (**H**ere **E**veryday **R**eady **O**ntime)
- At the end of each term, termly attendance is monitored and parent/carers receive a personal message or letter (see section 10)
- Attendance figures are discussed with parent/carers at teacher meetings (parents evening)
- SGS Pegasus School recognises that some absences are inevitable (i.e significant illness) but our attendance target of 96%, which is in line with local and national targets for schools and local and national practice

10. Engaging with parents and carers

We believe regular attendance is so important in ensuring best outcomes for our pupils that we will review our attendance performance each term. We regularly look at the pupils where there is a pattern of absence. Where a child has a pattern of Broken Weeks (see below) we will contact parent/carers to arrange an attendance meeting. We ensure that support to ensure attendance of all pupils who are in receipt of free school meals is prioritised.

- **End of term actions**

Pupil achieves 100% attendance	Dojo message to parent/carers (DJ1)
Pupil achieves 96% - 99% attendance	Dojo message to parent/carers (DJ2)
Pupil achieves 90% - 95% attendance	Dojo message to parent/carers (DJ3)
Pupil achieves less than 90% attendance (circumstances known)	Dojo message to parent/carers (DJ4)
Pupil achieves less than 90% attendance (circumstances unknown)	Letter home inviting parent/carers to an attendance meeting

- **Broken weeks**

A broken week is one where there is at least one late or absence mark in the register. The following actions are taken at the end of Term 2, Term 4 and Term 6:-

End of Term 2	5 or more Broken weeks in Term 1 - Term 2	Letter home inviting parent/carers to an attendance meeting
End of Term 4	10 or more Broken weeks in Term 1 - Term 4	Letter home inviting parent/carers to an attendance meeting. EWO to attend
End of Term 6	15 or more Broken weeks in Term 1 - Term 6	Attendance signposted to Strategic Lead for SEND of the pupil's Local Authority * Letter home inviting parent/carers to an attendance meeting. EWO to attend

11. Part-time time-tables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs; this decision is made by the Head Teacher in consultation with external agencies. A part time timetable is time limited, must not be treated as a long-term solution and can only be made with parent/carers agreement. This will be reviewed every two weeks within the time limited period. The school will mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

12. Persistent absence/non attenders

As of September 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that any pupil whose attendance falls below 90% will be classed as a Persistently Absent student. Therefore, if a pupil misses 19 or more days over an academic year they will be classed as Persistently Absent.

School Actions:-

- If a pupil attendance falls below 90% in a term and there are no extenuating reasons for this, parent/carers will be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher. An action plan will be drawn up with strategies to support improved attendance for the following term/s
- If attendance does not improve in the following two weeks, the actions listed below will be implemented.

Pupils not attending school

If a pupil fails to attend and parent/carers have indicated that they do not intend to send their child back to our school the following steps will be taken:-

- The Educational Welfare Service will be commissioned for a home visit
- An attendance meeting will be held with relevant agencies and the local authority to determine parent/carers views and to set an Action plan
- A member of staff with whom the parent/carers have a professional relationship with, will make a daily phone call home. The outcome of this call is logged in the school diary
- The Head Teacher will email parent/carers at the end of each week
- The input from the Educational Welfare Service will be monitored

Penalty Notices - information for parents and carers

South Gloucestershire Council

www.southglos.gov.uk



What is a Penalty Notice?

Penalty Notices were introduced under Section 23 (1) of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 to address unauthorised absence from school. It is a fine issued by South Gloucestershire Council to parents/carers of a child who has failed to attend school regularly and whose absence is unauthorised.

It does not require the parent to attend court but is an alternative to prosecution in the magistrate's court. Parents/carers who pay the fine in full within the time limits cannot later be prosecuted for the offence to which the Penalty Notice relates (Section 444 of the Education Act 1996).

Why have Penalty Notices been introduced?

Reducing absence from school is a key priority of the government and local authority because missing school may limit a pupil's attainment, disrupt school routines and the learning of others, and can leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime.

When might a Penalty Notice be issued?

A Penalty Notice may be issued to a parent in one or more of the following circumstances where more than 10 sessions of absence are recorded in 7 school weeks (ie 70 sessions).

There are 2 sessions per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon:

1. where unauthorised absences are recorded
2. where more than 10 sessions of unauthorised holiday are recorded and; a) the parent has not informed the school; or
b) the leave was not authorised; or
c) the child did not return on the agreed date
3. where the child is persistently late arriving at school after registers have closed
4. where a combination of more than 10 sessions of a) to c) above have been recorded.

How much is the fine?

The fine is £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

For example a two - parent family taking 2 children out of school for an unauthorised holiday would be liable for a total of £240 if paid within 21 days or £480 between 21 and 28 days.

The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.

What can you do to avoid receiving a Penalty Notice?

- ensure your child attends school every day and on time
- make sure your child knows that they cannot have odd days off school - 'Every Lesson Counts'
- speak to the class teacher or tutor if your child is beginning to miss odd days ☐ don't take family holidays in term time.

Is there an appeal process?

There is no right of appeal against the Penalty Notice but if you believe it to be incorrectly issued to you, you should contact the Senior Education Officer immediately (number below). If you believe you are not guilty of the offence and therefore decide not to pay the Notice, you have the right to represent your case at the Magistrates Court but you should seek legal advice before making this decision.

What happens if I do not pay?

If you have not paid the Penalty Notice in full **before the 28 days** allowed, the authority is required to commence legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

If proven, this could result in a fine of up to £1000 under Section 444 (1) or up to £2500 and/or three months imprisonment under Section 444 (1A), a Parenting Order or other sanctions at the Magistrates' disposal. You are strongly urged to seek legal advice if you are considering not paying the Penalty Notice.

Further information and advice

Department for Education - School attendance: Statutory guidance and advice:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance>
www.childrenslegalcentre.com www.adviceguide.org.uk www.ace-ed.org.uk

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