South Harringay School
Attendance Policy

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

> Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

> Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

> Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

> Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

> Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

> The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Curriculum and Community Committee undertakes this monitoring on behalf of the governing board.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school

> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The admin team and learning mentor

The admin team and learning mentor:

> Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level

> Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

> Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

> Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

〉 Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.5 School admin staff

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9:00am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00 am and will be kept open until 9:05am The register for the second session will be taken as each class finishes their lunch break.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45am, or as soon as practically possible.

The admin team prefer parents to email them to report an absence (admin@shsharingey.co.uk). However, you can call and leave a recorded message (0208 340 2757) as we check these messages each morning. Please let us know, your child's name, class, and why your child will be absent when writing your email, or leaving your message.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Please email our admin team (admin@shsharingey.co.uk) in advance of the appointment if at all possible

We will need you to provide evidence on arrival at school that the absence was due to a medical or dental appointment. The evidence can be in the form of:

- Text message from GP/dental surgery
- An email or letter from the GP/dentist confirming appointment

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Our learning mentor regularly check patterns of lateness and will make direct contact with parents to explore reasons for absence. The school will provide support and guidance when appropriate and will provide robust challenge to families to ensure children are punctual.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

> Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by

1. Texting parents/carers on the first morning of absence.
2. If there is no response to texts, we will call both numbers for parents/careers on that same morning
3. If there is no response from parents/carers, we will phone the emergency contact on that same morning
4. If there is still no contact by midday the admin team/learning will immediately alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide on the next steps of action, which may include making a home visit, or contacting the police and/or social services.

> Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

We report attendance figures to parents as part of our annual report to parents.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

Some examples of what our school considers an exceptional circumstance are:

- Funeral of a close family member
- Wedding of a parent or sibling
- External examination (e.g. music exam)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

A form is available from our office to request a term-time absence. We expect evidence to support the request, if at all possible.

The school does not grant leave for holidays during term time.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

Our learning mentor monitors attendance at least weekly, identifying pupils who attendance puts them at risk of being classified at 'persistently absent'. She will contact parents/carers with phone calls to address issues of persistent absence. She will issue letters and request meetings with parents/carers, if initial phone conversations do not result in improved attendance.

If the situation still does not improve, our Education Welfare Officer will intervene by meeting with parents/carers. If absence continue to be persistent the school will then make a formal referral to the Education Welfare Officer. This can lead to fines and/or court action.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Attendance monitoring

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
V	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to

		exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day