

THORPE HALL

SCHOOL

Attendance Policy **(including Children Missing from Education)**

This attendance policy ensures that all parents, staff and governors are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance and to keep children safe.

At Thorpe Hall School, we see education as a partnership between the family and the school. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for your every pupil, and parental support of this objective is vital.

Regular daily attendance at school is important for all children and young people to succeed in education and to ensure they do not fall behind both socially and developmentally. School participation maximises life opportunities for children and young people by providing them with education and support networks. We promote regular attendance, supporting children to develop important skills, knowledge and values that set them up for further learning and participation in their community, we believe this helps them to make the most of life opportunities and maximise their educational achievement.

Term dates are published on the school website and sent to parents two years in advance in order for you to arrange your holidays without disrupting your child's education.

Registration

All the school doors open at 8.45 (8:40 for the Lower School) until 8.55 am. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

Any child arriving later than 8.55am should enter via the main Reception doors and sign in the late book held in the office.

Each class/form teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. The attendance register must be completed by the class/form teacher by 9:05 and by 1:10pm (Lower School) 9:05 and 3:45pm (Upper School).

All attendance records are documented using SIMs software. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

The school office staff will collate registration information by 9:30am each morning. Where absence is unexplained by way of prior communication from parents or carers, they will undertake to communicate with each late pupil's home via the 'phone or any other means. The office will continue to try to contact parents up until 10:30am. If no contact has been achieved with the parents or carers of an absent pupil a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be advised.

The SLT member will then take appropriate action to best secure the safety of the child who is absent. They will continue to try to contact the parents or carers – including the additional contacts logged on SIMS. If no contact can be made and no explanation found for the absence then the SLT will inform the Chair of Governors and the police by no later than lunch time.

Lateness

Any pupil who comes into school after 8:55am and therefore has signed in at the school office will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L). Any child who arrives for school later than 10:30 will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning. (Attendance code U).

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.05am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues. We define persistent lateness as more than once a week on average taken over a four week period.

Illness

If your child is ill, please either telephone the school or email the office on sec@thorpehall.southend.sch.uk before 9am on the first day of absence. The school will make contact every day to check on the child's recovery. We will always telephone home on the first day of any unexplained absence in order to make sure that your child is safe.

Definitions

Authorised absence

- 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 a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school – through the Headteacher - can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.
- To seek an authorised absence in advance, parents should make a request to the School in writing a week or more before the anticipated day by completing the online Request for Absence Form on the School's website <https://www.thorpehall.southend.sch.uk/parents/request-absence/>

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Responsibilities and Safeguarding

In looking for trends and explanations for non-attendance all staff are mindful of safeguarding and the possibilities of absence due to some form of abuse, including bullying, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Staff should refer to the school's safeguarding policy for more guidance. All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class/Form teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers.

We monitor pupils' attendance through the daily register. We will inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or have missed **10 school days** or more without permission.

Children Missing Education

The school has a legal obligation to report to Southend Borough Council, all pupils who join and leave the school at any point from Reception to Year 11. The data the school gives Southend includes Name, DoB, Home address and address of the destination/arriving from school.

If a child is missing from school and no explanation can be found, parents are uncontactable and suspicion of harm is aroused, then the school will contact the admissions team at Southend BC once a suitable level of investigation has been undertaken. The school may also decide to contact social services through First Contact and refer to the [Safeguarding Policy](#).

If a child is missing from school but the school knows they are safe and where they are, then, in agreement with Southend BC, once 20 consecutive school days of unauthorised absence has elapsed the school will report the child as missing education to the admissions team at Southend BC. The email address for all communication regarding admissions is admissions@southend.gov.uk using a secure email service.

For instance, the school may know that a family has formally withdrawn a child from Thorpe Hall School, but despite repeated communication, the parents have not indicated which new school the child is attending nor confirmed that the child is being home educated. A child will remain on the school register until such time as the school receives confirmation that the child is either being home educated or is attending another school. Where there is any doubt the school will ring the new school to confirm attendance and start date. The register can then be amended to show the date of leaving as the date of withdrawal, and the admissions team at Southend informed. It is illegal to remove a child from the register (apart from Year 11) until information about destination school or home schooling is confirmed.

Since 1st September 2016, the school has a legal duty to notify Southend Borough Council (SBC) when a pupil's name is removed or added to the admissions register. This duty does not apply at standard transition points – where the pupil has completed the school's final year – unless SBC requests for such information to be provided.

The Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Ensuring families are contacted where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues

- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Making referrals to the Local Authority
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Governors will audit attendance records once a year.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Latest revision date:	Feb 20
Policy approved:	Feb 20
Next review date:	Feb 21