



SIMON BALLE ALL-THROUGH SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

First Issue: February 2022

Next Review: February 2023

Committee Responsible: Student, Community and Partnership

Context

Simon Balle All-through School is proud to be an inclusive school. We want the very best educational experiences, academic and social, for all of our young people. We set the very highest expectations for all of our students albeit from their entry into reception to when they leave in the sixth form. Our school values are essential in enabling students and adults to flourish and succeed, regardless of background or circumstance.

Rationale

Simon Balle All-through School is committed to raising levels of attendance for individual students and the school as a whole. Our belief is that good attendance and punctuality are vital, if our students are to take advantage of the many educational opportunities available to them. We set aspirational targets in terms of attendance and have an expectation that all students have a minimum attendance of **97%**.

This policy exists to provide a framework to support our vision of “creating tomorrow’s citizens today”, enabling our students to develop character and form positive habits.

Purpose

- To improve attendance of students at Simon Balle All-through school.
- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities regarding the attendance and punctuality of their children. (The Education Act 1996)
- Promoting and modelling good attendance ensuring students, parents and teachers are aware of the impact good attendance has on student outcomes.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety (safeguarding) of our students..
- Providing a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

Key roles and responsibilities

The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Simon Balle All-through School. The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Attendance Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.

The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Simon Balle All-through School.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for following the Attendance Policy and for ensuring students do so. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.

Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term time. Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that students attend school every day.

Students are also responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.

If a student fails to attend school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the school fail to secure the student's return to regular attendance, the County Council may take legal action. A complaint may be made against the parents, in the Magistrates' Court (under section 44 of the Children's Act 1996). Any exceptional mitigating circumstances are taken into account, when considering legal action.

Definitions

The Headteacher and Senior Leader in charge of attendance will decide whether an absence will be authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the student to be away, or when an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory.

The following definitions apply at Simon Balle All-through School:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after lesson one has started unless a valid reason (then a late and reason given)
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- Sickness (may require medical evidence)

- Medical or dental appointments - we would emphasise that where possible appointments are to be made outside of school hours.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- Exceptional family circumstances - bereavement

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy for part or all of the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school, after the register has closed, without reason.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been authorised.
- Leaving school without an authorised reason during the school day.

Persistent absenteeism (PA):

- PA is absence of 10% or more. An individual child is deemed to be a persistent absentee if their attendance is less than 90%, regardless or not whether the absences have been authorised.

Young carers

We understand the difficulties young carers face. We will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school. Our school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

Student expectations

Students will be expected to attend school every day and this will be reinforced in lesson time, form time, assemblies, celebration events and parent information evenings.

Absence procedures

Parents/carers must contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence. Alternatively, parents/carers may call into school and report to the school reception.

First day absence response system is in place. Any student who is registered as absent without an adequate explanation, will receive a phone call to their parents/ carers to report that their child is not in school. It is the parent/carer' responsibility to ensure they call the absence line to report any absence before the start of the school day.

If a student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days (without an explanation being forthcoming), the Form Tutor should inform the Head of Year and enquiries made where relevant. If the absentee is the student about whom there is already a concern, the Safeguarding team will make every effort to contact the parent/carer immediately. This will be to help identify/protect against any risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse of exploitation and help prevent risks of them going missing in the future. (See Safeguarding Policy)

In the case of persistent (or intermittently) absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer, teacher in charge of attendance or the head of year. This will be to discuss support strategies to re-integrate the student back into mainstream school.

If student absence drops below 90 percent, the local attendance officer will be informed.

For any student who is 'in care' (CLA) the school will inform the Virtual School on a weekly basis regarding their attendance.

Contact information

Parents/carers must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details. Parents/carers are responsible for updating the school if their details change.

Attendance officer

Simon Balle All-through works in partnership with the allocated LAAO to improve attendance for individual students and the whole school. Appropriate staff meet regularly with the LAAO to discuss and review attendance.

When the attendance does not improve sufficiently, students will be referred to the local attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local attendance officer has the power to issue sanctions, such as prosecution.

Students unable to attend school for extended periods of time for medical reasons (certified by a medical practitioner) may be referred to the Education Support team for Medical Absence (ESTMA). Additionally, the school may support students with health difficulties through the involvement of the school student support worker, referral to CAMHS or the Director of Care and Wellbeing. Close liaisons will be kept with any outside agency and work will be set, when required, to support the education of the child.

If a student is absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more the local authority will be informed under safeguarding.

Lesson Times and Lateness

It is expected that all students will arrive at their lesson by 8.35am to start lessons at **8.40am** in the secondary phase and **8.50am** in the Primary phase. Registers will close 20 minutes after those times.

Students who arrive after the designated time will be marked 'L' and minutes/reason added to Go4schools. If they arrive after the register has closed, they should sign in at the front office or reception in the Primary phase and will be marked with a 'U' code. Names of individuals are taken and then children are sent to class. The Attendance team will update the registers accordingly and track trends and patterns.

A register is taken electronically in every lesson by the class teacher. The teacher will mark students as present, absent or late and the number of minutes late. Any missing marks are investigated, and messages of absence are put onto the system. Where no reason is provided for absence, a message will be sent home to ask the parents to confirm the reason for their child's absence.

Where no answer is sought, phone calls will be made home and home visits may be undertaken on the same day.

At 10.30am, the list of children who are absent, the day's attendance and any other relevant information is on Go4schools and circulated to the core attendance team, senior leaders and the HOY/Phase leaders.

Term Time leave

At Simon Balle All-through School, our aim is to prepare students for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed. It is strongly recommended that holidays are **not** taken during term time (in line with recommendations to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations – 1st September 2013) and will only be authorised by the Headteacher, up to a maximum of 10 school days, in **exceptional** circumstances once written permission has been sought.

Any requests for leave during term time must be made through the schools centralised system online and will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be taken into account.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- During year seven when a student is settling into the school.
- Immediately before and during formal assessment periods.
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason.

If term time leave is not granted, taking a student out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions.

Monitoring

Simon Balle All-through monitors and promotes attendance and punctuality throughout the year. The Head of Year/Phase leader and teacher in charge of attendance will monitor attendance and take appropriate action (dependent upon student circumstances and Attendance Officer advice).

Attendance sessions and percentages are monitored by pastoral staff weekly and this is reviewed with the HOY/Phase leader fortnightly. Attendance percentages of individual students are displayed on Go4schools and written on reports.

Attendance statistics are reported to the Local authority and the governing body.

Students who are continuously late or those with low attendance may have an extended school day to catch up on missing education.

All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In **very exceptional** circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a student's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution.

Promoting Attendance and Rewards

We place a high focus on good attendance and the link between attainment. We celebrate good and improved attendance throughout the year and this is shared in assemblies and via certificates. Other school incentives to celebrate good attendance matters posters and prize draws.

Attendance during Coronavirus

During this period the school will follow all guidance set out by the government and the DfE regarding Coronavirus. Parents or carers must always inform the school if their child is unable to attend by using the absence line and Covid email address.

From the start of the Autumn term 2021 student attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules and codes on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered student
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

Appendix 1 - Attendance Codes

Code	School Meaning	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
@	Do not use	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration (attending other estab.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (not med/dental appointments)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before reg closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical / Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Abs (not covered by other code)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
X	DfES #: School closed to pupils/Covid related	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Z	Do not use	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
!	DfES X: Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
*	DfES Z: Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session