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A Learning Ladder for Life

26th February 2026

Dear Parents/carers,

Re: New Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2025/2026

At South Borough Primary School, we are committed to providing the best possible learning environment so that every child can reach their full potential. Central to this is regular school attendance. Being in school on time, every day, is crucial to your child's education.

Schools have a statutory duty to set a clear vision for maintaining good attendance and to establish effective systems for tackling absence. Our new [Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2025/2026](#) sets out our updated systems for doing this. We have also provided a visual guide highlighting the key points of the policy for your reference ([Attendance Visual for Parents](#)).

Legal Obligations

Please be aware that parents have a legal obligation to ensure their children receive a suitable full-time education. The law states that if you do not ensure your child attends school regularly, you are guilty of an offense. This may result in legal intervention from the local authority, including Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders, or prosecution, which can carry a fine of up to £2,500 and/or three months in prison.

Key Changes to Our Policy

To better support our families and ensure high standards, we have introduced several key changes:

1. **New Intervention Triggers:** Support and intervention for absences will now be based on the total number of days a child is absent (including both authorised and unauthorised sessions) rather than focusing solely on unauthorised absences.
2. **Regular Attendance Updates:** You will receive an increased number of letters throughout the year to provide regular updates on your child's attendance picture.
3. **Attendance Clinics:** We have introduced weekly Attendance Clinics run by Mrs. Higham on **Mondays and Thursdays from 8:50 am to 9:30 am**. These clinics provide a space to discuss specific concerns. Parents can choose to drop in, or the school may formally invite you to attend a clinic if your child's attendance becomes a concern. Please report to the school office to attend.
4. **Lateness Protocols:** We have established clear triggers for managing lateness. For example, three lates in a single term will trigger a formal reminder letter.
5. **Updated Incentives:** We have reviewed our attendance incentives to better recognise children who maintain excellent attendance as well as those who show significant improvement.

Stagshaw Close, Postley Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6TL



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Our Attendance Team

At South Borough, our proactive Attendance Team meets formally every week to review the attendance of all children and decide on necessary actions. The team consists of:

- **Mr. Currie** (Headteacher)
- **Mrs. Higham** (Family Liaison Officer)
- **Mrs. Jensen** (Office Administrator)

The Impact of Absence and Lateness

We cannot overstate the negative impact that sporadic attendance and lateness have on a child's education. Missing school interrupts the teaching sequence and key concepts, forcing children to have to catch up on vital learning. This is particularly critical in EYFS and Year 1, where new sounds are taught daily in phonics; missing these lessons directly limits a child's progress in reading. Furthermore, regular attendance is vital for children to build stable relationships and develop social skills.

Holidays in Term Time

We strongly discourage taking holidays during term time. While we understand that travel can be cheaper during these periods, any absence from school disrupts learning. The school will not authorise term-time holidays except in truly exceptional circumstances. All requests for leave must be submitted in advance via the ['Withdrawal from Learning' Google Form](#). Please note that unauthorised term-time holidays may result in a Penalty Notice.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to ensure your child achieves the best possible attendance this year.

Yours sincerely,

Mathew Currie
Headteacher

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