

*Solefield School (DfE number 886/6038) is a member of the Sevenoaks Family of Schools and legally part of Sevenoaks School, a company limited by guarantee (4908949) and a registered charity (1101358) with a registered office at Sevenoaks School, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HU. Any reference to governors, the governing body or the chair of governors refers to the governing body of Sevenoaks School. Any reference to local governors refers to the non-executive members of the Solefield School Local Advisory Board.*



## Solefield School

### **Attendance Policy**

#### 1. Aims and Principles

In line with the latest Department for Education guidance on school attendance (Working Together to Improve School Attendance), Solefield School is committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit from full-time education through excellent attendance and punctuality.

Regular attendance is fundamental to pupils' academic progress, personal development, wellbeing, and safeguarding. The school maintains a culture of high expectations, where attending school every day, on time, is the norm.

We place strong emphasis on early identification of absence, robust monitoring, and working in partnership with parents to secure the best outcomes for every pupil. Attendance is a shared responsibility between the school and families.

#### 2. Expectations

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day during term time
- Arrive punctually and ready to learn

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends regularly and arrives on time
- Inform the school promptly of any absence
- Avoid taking holidays or other leave during term time

The school sets and maintains consistently high expectations for attendance in line with national guidance.

### 3. Registration and Punctuality

The school day begins with morning registration between **8.15am and 8.25am**.

- Pupils must be present and registered within this time
- Arrival after 8.25am will be recorded as late

An **afternoon registration session** also takes place each day (timings vary depending on year group), in accordance with statutory requirements.

Punctuality is closely monitored, and repeated lateness will be followed up.

### 4. Reporting Absence

Parents must:

- Inform the school **before 8.15am on the first day of absence**
- Provide a clear reason for absence
- Keep the school updated for any ongoing absence

Failure to report absence promptly will result in same-day follow-up.

### 5. Authorisation of Absence

- Absences due to **illness or medical appointments** will be authorised
- All other absences must be **approved in advance** by the Headmistress, **Helen McClure**

Unauthorised absences include:

- Term-time holidays, unless in exceptional circumstances and cleared in advance by Mrs McClure
- Social or family events, unless in exceptional circumstances and cleared in advance by Mrs McClure
- Avoidable lateness

### 6. Monitoring, Tracking and Safeguarding

In line with DfE expectations, attendance is actively monitored and reviewed.

**Kate Easton**, Senior Attendance Champion and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL),:

- Tracks patterns of attendance, including **persistent absence and lateness**
- Follows up concerns promptly with parents
- Ensures appropriate safeguarding procedures are implemented

Unexplained absence and lateness are treated as a potential safeguarding concern and will be followed up without delay.

### 7. Term-Time Leave

Term-time leave is strongly discouraged and will only be granted in **exceptional circumstances**, at the discretion of the Headmistress.

Parents should submit requests in advance.

### 8. EYFS and Non-Statutory School Age

While children in EYFS below statutory school age are not legally required to attend, Solefield School maintains the same high expectations in line with safeguarding and best practice.

- Absences must still be reported
- Same-day contact will be made where no explanation is received
- Regular attendance is strongly encouraged to support routine and development

The school works closely with parents and may allow appropriate flexibility during settling-in periods.

### 9. Roles and Responsibilities

**Headmistress (Helen McClure):**

- Overall responsibility for attendance
- Authorisation of non-medical absences
- Consideration of exceptional circumstances

**Senior Attendance Champion / DSL (Kate Easton):**

- Monitoring and tracking attendance data
- Following up persistent absence and lateness
- Leading safeguarding responses linked to attendance

**Parents:**

- Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality
- Communicating clearly and promptly with the school
- Supporting the school's high expectations

**10. Exceptional Circumstances**

Requests for absence in exceptional circumstances should be made directly to the Headmistress. Each case will be considered individually, in line with the school's high expectations and DfE guidance.

**11. Review**

This policy is reviewed annually.

**Helen McClure**

**Headmistress**

**1 September 2025**