



Sunridge Circle Primary

Learner Attendance Policy

1. PREAMBLE

In terms of section 24 of the Policy on Learner Attendance of the Department of Basic Education, the principal of a public school must determine the pupil attendance policy of that school.

The school community, led by the principal and SGB, is responsible for promoting and monitoring school attendance in order to give learners the best chance of benefiting from their school experience. Regular and punctual attendance at school are prerequisites for a sound education. It is thus important for the principal, working with the SMT and the SGB, to inculcate a caring school environment where there is a culture of punctual and regular attendance at school, and in which the school takes an interest in every learner's well-being, remaining alert to problems that might affect his/her attendance. The purpose of this policy is therefore to promote punctual and regular attendance at Sunridge Circle Primary School.

The Principal has accordingly proposed, and the Governing Body of Sunridge Circle Primary School has constituted, the following as the Learner Attendance Policy of the school, in the belief that its provisions are consistent with the relevant Acts, Policies, Regulations and Guidelines of the Department of Basic Education and the Provincial Education Department.

2. EXCEPTIONS

While punctual and regular attendance is important, it may not always be possible or desirable for a learner to attend school. This will be recognised by the School and due cognizance given thereto when issues of poor attendance are scrutinised. The following are examples of 'unavoidable and/or acceptable absence': physical or psychological illness; death of a family member; an appointment at court, strikes, riots, social services or other official agencies; religious or cultural observances approved by the SGB or Principal; (i.e. events that are outside of human control, such as extreme weather conditions); and any other absences resulting from exceptional circumstances deemed acceptable by the Principal.

3. PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The principal will monitor and analyse learners' attendance rates by grade and must include such information in the reports s/he makes to the HoD or SGB in terms of section 16A of SASA.
- 3.2 Where a learner is absent from school for three consecutive school days, without valid reason, the principal must:
 - 3.2.1 Emphasise the learner's duty to attend school punctually and regularly.
 - 3.2.2 Inform the parents of the importance of regular attendance, as well as of the implications and consequences, legal as well as educational, of poor attendance.
 - 3.2.3 Whenever necessary, elicit outside agency support to address poor attendance.
- 3.3 Where a pupil is absent without valid reason for 10+ days, s/he must be removed from the roll and the parents and class teacher informed accordingly in writing.
- 3.4 Where such pupil (3.3 above) is subject to compulsory schooling, the district office must also be informed.

4. CLASS TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Every class teacher is responsible for compiling and marking the *class register* in the class registration period on each school day, maintaining it accurately and forwarding relevant details on attendance/absence to the school office.

5. SUBJECT TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.1 Every subject teacher is responsible for marking the absentee register first thing in the morning as instructed, maintaining it accurately and forwarding it to the school secretary before 08:30 who will capture the data on Staffroom the school management system.
- 5.2 A teacher who has reason to believe that a learner is absent from a period without valid reason must report such absence to the school office for the secretary to investigate.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE "ACCOUNTABLE SECRETARY" or the "ADMISSIONS AND ATTENDANCE ADMINISTRATOR" (or similar title as chosen by the school)

The Accountable Secretary/Admissions and Attendance Administrator must:

- 6.1 Inform the principal when a learner is absent without explanation for three consecutive school days.
- 6.2 Draw the attention of the principal to cases of repeated absence, whether consecutive or not.
- 6.3 Administer the system by co-ordinating class and period registers as they are submitted, collating the data, providing the necessary information for reports, and keeping the principal or other delegated senior staff member aware of developments relevant to learner attendance in the school.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISCIPLINARY OFFICERS OF THE SCHOOL

- 7.1 If, despite the school's intervention, a learner persists in being absent without valid reason:
 - 7.1.1 The learner must be charged with breach of the school's Code of Conduct for Learners.
 - 7.1.2 The learner's record in the class register is cancelled if the learner is absent without valid reason for 10 or more consecutive school days – class teacher and parent to be notified in writing.
- 7.2 A record of all communication with a parent must be kept in the learner's personal file so that the matter may be followed up with the parent in an appropriate manner, should it become necessary.

8. LOGISTICAL MATTERS



- 8.1 The class register will be marked on a class list at the following time(s): (e.g. daily before 08h10 in the class venues, with the date at the top of each column)
- 8.2 The **class register** must be forwarded to the school secretary before 08:30.
- 8.3 Follow-up action the school will take if a learner is absent: (e.g.):
 - 8.3.1 There will be follow-up of absentees on the Absentee List, by means of telephone calls to randomly-selected parents or the homes of absentees where there is suspicion/concern about the validity of the absence, on at least a weekly basis.
 - 8.3.2 If a learner is absent for three consecutive school days without explanation, the class teacher or grade head **MUST** follow up the absence by contacting the home and report the outcome to the principal.
 - 8.3.3 If a learner is absent without reason, the principal must inform the parent of the importance of regular attendance; emphasise the essential nature of punctual and regular attendance; inform the parent of the educational and legal implications of absenteeism (the latter especially if the learner is subject to compulsory school attendance), as well as the risk of the learner's enrolment in the school being cancelled; require the learner's return to school; and, if necessary, elicit the support/intervention of the district office and/or relevant social development agencies.
- 8.4 If despite the intervention of the principal, a learner persists in being absent without valid reason, action as envisaged in section 7 above must be instituted.
- 8.5 Support will be given to a learner who has been absent, in order to make up for time lost or assessments missed, on the following basis (e.g.):
 - 8.5.1 When a learner is absent for one or two days, it is the responsibility of the learner him/herself to follow up with the relevant teachers, obtain any notes, worksheets or other materials provided to the class during his/ her absence, and to ensure that the work, including homework, is caught up.
 - 8.5.2 Where absence of more than two consecutive days is noted, the Grade Head will co-ordinate the collection of relevant handouts and homework tasks and ensure that they are sent home via a friend/neighbour in the school, or are packaged and left with the school Secretary, and that the parents are requested to arrange for their collection.

8.5.3 Upon return to school by a learner after a prolonged absence (e.g. 5 days or more) the Grade Head and/or School Counselling Department will liaise with the learner and his/her subject teachers to ensure that the catching up of work is monitored, missed assignments are handed in and marked, and, should it be necessary, extra classes are arranged with relevant teachers or peer supporters to ensure that any gaps in knowledge and understanding are eradicated.

9. SUMMARY OF ACTIONS REQUIRED

- 9.1 Register to be taken at least once per day, and summary of the day's attendance formally recorded.
- 9.2 Formal report sent to Principal if a pupil is absent for more than 3 consecutive days.
- 9.3 Recorded contact takes place between school and home in such a case.
- 9.4 Pupils absent for more than 10 days without valid reason are removed from the school roll: written notification of action to class teacher, parent, attendance secretary and district office.
- 9.5 Subject teachers, the Grade Head and/or the Counselling Department ensure that work missed is caught up and knowledge gaps are appropriately addressed.

POLICY APPROVAL

DESIGNATION		DATE
PRINCIPAL		2024.06.04
SGB CHAIR		2024.06.04
REVUE DATE	2026.06.04	