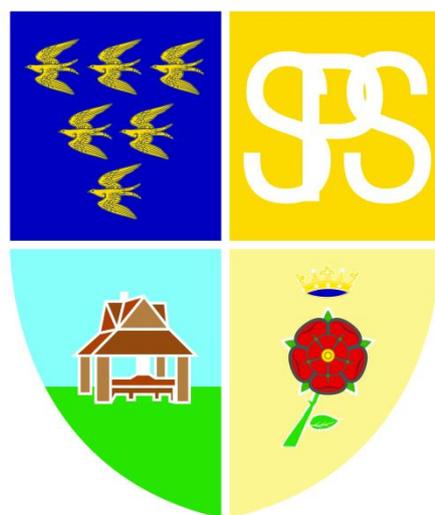




Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School



Attendance Policy 2020-2021

Implemented	September 2020
Review Cycle	Annual
Review Date	Academic Year 2021-2022

Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School



Motto:

Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God

Values:

Aspiration	Honesty	Forgiveness
Courage	Thankfulness	Kindness

Vision:

**Our school is a family with God at its heart.
Christian values guide and inform all that we do.**

We aim to:

- **Provide a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment where everyone is able to learn and grow as a unique individual.**
- **Encourage and support each other to be ambitious, resilient and independent lifelong learners.**
- **Develop enquiring minds and a love of learning.**
- **Value everyone and celebrate their beliefs, achievements, skills and contributions.**
- **Provide a curriculum that is creative, exciting, challenging and takes learning beyond the classroom.**
- **Reach the highest standards in achievement and attainment.**
- **Create a learning community where everyone is nurtured and challenged to develop academically, personally, morally and spiritually.**
- **Support each other to develop the skills, attitudes and values to grow into responsible members of our global community and God's world.**

Learning, Loving and Growing Together with God

Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School by:

- Encouraging staff, parents/carers and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- Providing clear procedures for involving parents and carers relating to school attendance.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never wise to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service ESBAS from the Local Authority.

The School will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use Legal Interventions or seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school has the following standard procedures for registration:

- Registration time is from 8:55 until 9:00am, with registers closing at 9:15am.
- Any child arriving during the registration window is on time.
- Any child arriving between the end of the registration window and the registers closing will be marked as late. They will collect a late token from the office to ensure the class teacher knows they have been marked as late and are signed into the building. If a child arrives after the end of registration without a token, they must be sent to the office to be registered.
- Any child arriving after the close of the registers will be marked as absent. The authorisation of such absences will follow the regular criteria.
- Afternoon registration is at 1:20 pm and any child not present when the register is taken will be marked as absent.
- Early pick up of children is not authorised, except for certain non-routine medical appointments
- Late pick up of children after school will be monitored and if necessary managed using our safeguarding procedures.
- The new electronic sign in system will be used to register children who are late for school and to sign out children leaving early to reinforce the message to parents that this is not acceptable.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Sickness absence should be reported to the school office absence line before 9.30am on the first day of absence and follow up calls made to keep the school informed if the absence is longer than one day.
- Planned absence during term time that is not medical should be requested in writing using the 'Withdrawal from Learning Form' (Appendix 1) and parents/carers should be issued with the 'Request for Withdrawal from Learning during Term Time' leaflet issued by ESCC (Appendix 2).
- Routine and non-emergency GP and dental appointments should be made out of school hours. If an emergency appointment is needed the child may well not attend school that day for that reason.
- Hospital appointments which are arranged should be arranged for out of school hours or for the afternoons where possible. Evidence of the appointment time will be needed for authorisation to be considered.
- Hospital appointments which are given (e.g. for certain clinics which only run at given times) parents should request an appointment that will enable their child to be in school for as much of the day as possible. All children should be in school for the first part of the morning wherever possible. Evidence of the appointment time will be needed for authorisation to be considered.
- Private or alternative health care appointments will not be allowed (authorised) in school hours unless supported by a GP letter and evidence that the practitioner only provides services in school hours.

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. However, leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged outside of school time.

The school has adopted the following attendance target:

- Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School has adopted an acceptable rate of attendance as 96%, with a target of 96.5%.

This will be monitored and encouraged in the following ways:

Before starting at our school:

- Parents are made aware at open days, new parent evenings and school visits that the school take attendance seriously and about our expectations.
- Parents will also be made aware that by sending their child to school before they are 5, they are obliged to follow the policies of the school which includes not taking children on holiday in term time.
- All new parents will be given a copy of our Attendance Leaflet (Appendix 3) that summarises this policy and our school expectations for good attendance.

Absence & Lateness:

- The School Secretary will phone all families of absent children daily at 9.30am if there has been no information received as to where the child is.
- The School Secretary will send a letter (Appendix 4) each week to any child's parent /carer where information has not been received regarding an absence and the absence remains unexplained.
- The School Secretary will send letters to any family weekly where children have been late twice or more in that week (Appendix 5).
- The School Secretary will send letters to the parent/carers of any child whose attendance has dropped below 95%.
- The School Secretary will publish the name of the class with the best attendance on the weekly newsletter. This class will be announced in Celebration Worship each week, will receive the attendance certificate and will be allowed to sit on benches in worship each day.
- The School Secretary will produce a report for the Headteacher outlining (Appendix 6):
 - Children who have been late on more than 2 occasions in that week
 - Children whose attendance is below 96% but above 90%
 - Children whose attendance is below 90%
- This report can be generated weekly or termly.
- Senior Leaders will employ the ESBAS flow chart (Appendix 7) for any children highlighted in the termly report.
- Termly the School Secretary will send home an attendance summary letter (Appendix 8)
 - Green Letter
 - Amber Letter
 - Red Letter
- Attendance figures will be reported to governors as part of the Headteacher Report each term.

Rewarding Good Attendance:

Good levels of attendance and punctuality will be encouraged through the following:

- Praise in the school newsletter for the class with the best attendance and for classes with attendance at or above target (96.5%).
- Weekly class attendance certificate for classes with attendance at or above target (96.5%). See Appendix 9 displayed on classroom door and trophy for the class with the best attendance to be displayed prominently in the winning classroom.

- Termly (3 times per year) certificates awarded for over target attendance for that term:
 - 96.5% to 99.9% Good Attendance Certificate (Appendix 10)
 - 100% Gold Attendance Certificate (Appendix 11)
- At the end of each school year in Term 6 good attendance will be celebrated by:
 - Children with over target attendance receiving a Good Attendance Certificate, having their name in the end of term newsletter and a thank you letter from the Headteacher.
 - Children with 100% attendance will receive a £10 book voucher to recognise their achievement.
- Special awards can be given at the discretion of the SLT e.g. Improved Punctuality, Most Improved Attendance or 100% attendance for 4 consecutive years.

Appointments

We would ask that, wherever possible, routine dental and medical appointments are made outside of school hours. If an appointment has to be made during the school day please ensure that you bring your child in before or after the appointment to minimise disruption to their learning. We are unable to authorise a whole day absence due to a routine appointment, so should a child not come into school due to, for example, a dental appointment at 11.00am, the morning would be recorded as an authorised absence and the afternoon would be unauthorised. Please bring appointment cards or letters to the office to be photocopied as we need to keep a copy in your child's file.

Withdrawal from Learning Applications

Forms to request an absence from learning are available from the office. We are **not able** to authorise time away from school unless there are exceptional circumstances and we require 14 days' notice of any absence. **Family holidays are not covered by 'exceptional circumstances'**, so if there really is no alternative time that you can go on holiday, then you will receive a fixed penalty notice (£60 per parent, per child which increases to £120 if not paid within 21 days).

We do our very best to be fair when considering each application and whilst we do have some discretion if the request is exceptional, with the attendance rate as it currently is, **East Sussex County Council have told all Headteachers to issue fines.**

Lateness

School begins at 8.55 am and children should be in school by this time and ready to start the school day. If your child arrives after the children have come in to school please bring them to the office where they will be recorded using the electronic sign-in. If your child is signed in after 9:00 am they will be recorded as arriving late. If your child arrives late after the registers close at 9.15 am they will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence for that session.

Punctuality is important educationally so that children don't miss out on their learning time and is also a legal requirement. If you are having problems getting your child to school on time, please make an appointment to see the class teacher or the Headteacher to discuss how school can support you.

Absence due to Illness

We know that illnesses can't be helped and there are public health policies around some symptoms that mean your child cannot attend school. However, we have experienced children being off with what appear to be minor illnesses and would ask that you think carefully about whether your child really needs to miss school for certain complaints. Our office staff can

administer medicines as long as we have your consent in writing (forms are available from the office) so please always come and talk to us if you have any concerns.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Governing Body

- Approving the school Attendance Target and Attendance Policy annually at the first FGB
- Requesting information from the Headteacher on any aspect of the school, including attendance
- Identifying and attending relevant training regarding attendance

Headteacher:

- Positively promoting good attendance within the school
- Overseeing the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures
- Ensuring the collection of accurate statistical data
- Developing efficient monitoring and evaluation systems
- Forming positive links with ESBAS
- Reporting to the Governing Body

Class Teachers

- Accurate recording of the daily electronic register
- Communicating concerns to the Headteacher or DSL as appropriate
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality within the class
- Maintaining positive links with parents whilst communicating concerns
- Ensuring all notes and messages received regarding attendance are passed promptly to the School Secretary

School Secretary (Attendance Officer)

- Maintaining pupil attendance information using SIMS
- Maintaining electronic registration system
- Receiving and recording telephone communication from parents
- Assisting in the collection of data
- On and Off rolling procedures
- Dealing with casual admissions

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents/carers as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix 1:

Withdrawal From Learning Form
(saved as PDF on server)

APPENDIX 1



**Withdrawal from Learning Application:
For Exceptional Circumstances**

Did you know that across the year there are just 190 school days? That means there are already 179 days set aside for weekends, holidays, family visits and resourcing days out. We believe every school day counts to give your child the greatest opportunity of attaining a good education and to support a happy and healthy future.

With 179 days already marked out as 'non-school-days', you should have an exceptional reason to withdraw your child from school. The following are considered legitimate reasons and are likely to be rejected and unauthorised:

- Trips to visit family/friends
- Cheaper family holidays
- Your child's birthday
- Tickets to sports/culture events

80% is recognised as an expected level of school attendance. If your child is out of school for 8 days each term, then their attendance is below 80% and they're spending more days out of school than in it! Should your child need time off due to illness, this figure will quickly become even lower. Because five days of school equates to 20 hours of learning, catching up with entire work out of school is unrealistic.

From a young person's perspective, missing schools means:

- Missing out on fun projects and school activities
- Struggling to catch up on work
- Channelling with school friends

WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?					
80%		80%		80%	
80%		80%		80%	
Good		Warning		Serious Concern	
☺		☹		☹☹	
Only 1-2 days missed per term		Between 3-4 days missed per term		More than 4 days missed per term	

The vast majority of headteachers do not authorise any absence in term time, in fact, many schools refused 80% of requests last year.

Think twice about whether you want to proceed.

To be completed by parent/carer:

Child's Name _____ Tutor Group/Class _____

Date of withdrawal from learning _____ Date of return to learning _____

Total number of learning days missed _____

Reason withdrawal from learning is requested:

Appendix 1:

Withdrawal From Learning Form
(saved as PDF on server)

Your child has the right to a full time education and the opportunities that this can bring. We hope that you will work in partnership with us to make sure that your child attends school every day, allowing them access to the education they deserve.

I understand that if the request is unauthorised the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified of the absence taken and a legal intervention may be instigated in the form of a Penalty Notice or Simple Caution. If a Penalty Notice is issued it will be to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. I understand that if I do not pay this will result in legal action.

Name of Parent/Carer _____
Signed: _____ Date: _____
Home Address _____

This form will be submitted to the Headteacher for review. A senior member of staff will conduct a telephone interview with you to discuss the request and to confirm the decision.

Headteacher decision:
Name of child _____ Class _____ Year Group _____
Date of telephone interview: _____
Date decision form sent home: _____
 Authorised: Your request has been authorised for the following dates: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____
 Unauthorised: Your request has been unauthorised for the following dates: ____/____/____ to ____/____/____
 Request to EASD attaching telephone interview log
Headteacher signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 2:

Parents' Leaflet Withdrawal from Learning During term Time
(saved as PDF on server)



Parents' Leaflet Withdrawal from Learning During term Time (saved as PDF on server)

What are my rights?

From 1st September 2013 new guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) will apply to all requested absences in term-time. An absence during term-time, including family holidays, is not a right.

Any absence from school disrupts a child's learning. In addition, children returning from a term-time absence generally require additional time from teachers to catch up on the teaching they have missed. This can have an impact on the education of other pupils in their class.

Therefore, the DfE only allows a Head teacher the discretion to authorise an absence if they believe that there are exceptional circumstances.

What are exceptional circumstances?

These have not been specifically defined by the DfE; it is therefore each individual head teacher's discretion that will determine this.

Only a Head teacher can make that decision based on the information provided to them by you. The decision cannot be made or changed by the Local Authority.

What circumstances are not exceptional?

These include:-

- a) the availability of cheap holidays;
- b) an absence or holiday paid for, or booked, by someone else
- c) an overlap with beginning/end of term.
- d) a mix-up in term dates

(this list is not exhaustive)

How do I request an absence?

The school will provide you with an absence request form which you should complete and return at least 14 days before the proposed absence.

The Head teacher will then make the decision whether the absence is considered to be an exceptional circumstance. If it is considered not to be an exceptional circumstance it will be unauthorised.

That decision will be relayed to you by the school.

If the absence has been authorised, because of exceptional circumstances, you must ensure you return on the date you have specified. The absence will then be recorded as an authorised absence and coded accordingly.

What if my request is not authorised?

If you feel you have exceptional circumstances, have you ensured that the school are fully aware of these?

Have you supplied all information and any supporting documentation?

If an absence has been unauthorised by the Head teacher, the Local Authority cannot override their decision.

Therefore, if you have any queries in relation to why your absence was unauthorised you must refer these to the Head teacher, not the issuing authority.

What if the unauthorised absence is taken?

The school may request the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice. This is a fine of £120 per parent for each child – the fine is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is unpaid court action can follow.

Legislation

This leaflet reflects the guidelines for the issue of Penalty Notices as set out in the DfE guidance on Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour 2013 summarising the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 and subsequent amendments.

Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Caroline Harvey



Brede Lane, Sedlescombe, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 0RQ

Tel: 01424 870585

Email: Mrs Harges: office@sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk

www.sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk

September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Child's Name: Child A
Class and Year Group: Van Gogh – Year 1

RE: Unauthorised Absence

According to our school register your child was marked absent from school on XXX

Please complete the attached reply slip giving the reason for your child's absence and return to the School Office as soon as possible.

The reason for making this request is that we have to keep official records of every child's absence along with the reason for absence and the relevant absence code. As no reason has currently been given for your child's absence it has been recorded as unauthorised. Until we have been given a satisfactory reason for the absence it will continue to be recorded as such.

If you have already provided a written reason for the absence please accept my apologies and discuss the matter with Mrs Harges so that this matter can be quickly rectified. Thank you for your help with this matter.

Yours Faithfully

C Harvey

Mrs C Harvey
Headteacher



Date: _____

Dear Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School,

My child _____ was absent from school for _____ day(s)

from _____

This was because:

Yours Sincerely,

Signed _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

Appendix 5:

Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Caroline Harvey



Brede Lane, Sedlescombe, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 0RQ

Tel: 01424 870585

Email: Mrs Hades: office@sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk

www.sedlescombecep.e-sussex.sch.uk

Monday 9th September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Child's Name: Child A
Class and Year Group: Van Gogh – Year 1

RE: Late Arrival at School

I am writing to you because our records show that your child has arrived late to school on at least two occasions in the past week. This is a concern as it impacts not only on your child's learning experience, but also disrupts the learning of other children in the school.

Children who arrive late at school:

- Miss out on the start of lessons
- Disrupt the work of the class or interrupt Collective Worship
- Increase the workload of members of staff
- Are often upset and embarrassed by arriving late

Please ensure that your child arrives on time for school in the future to avoid upset to your child and disrupting the learning of children in the school.

Yours Faithfully

C Harvey

Mrs C Harvey

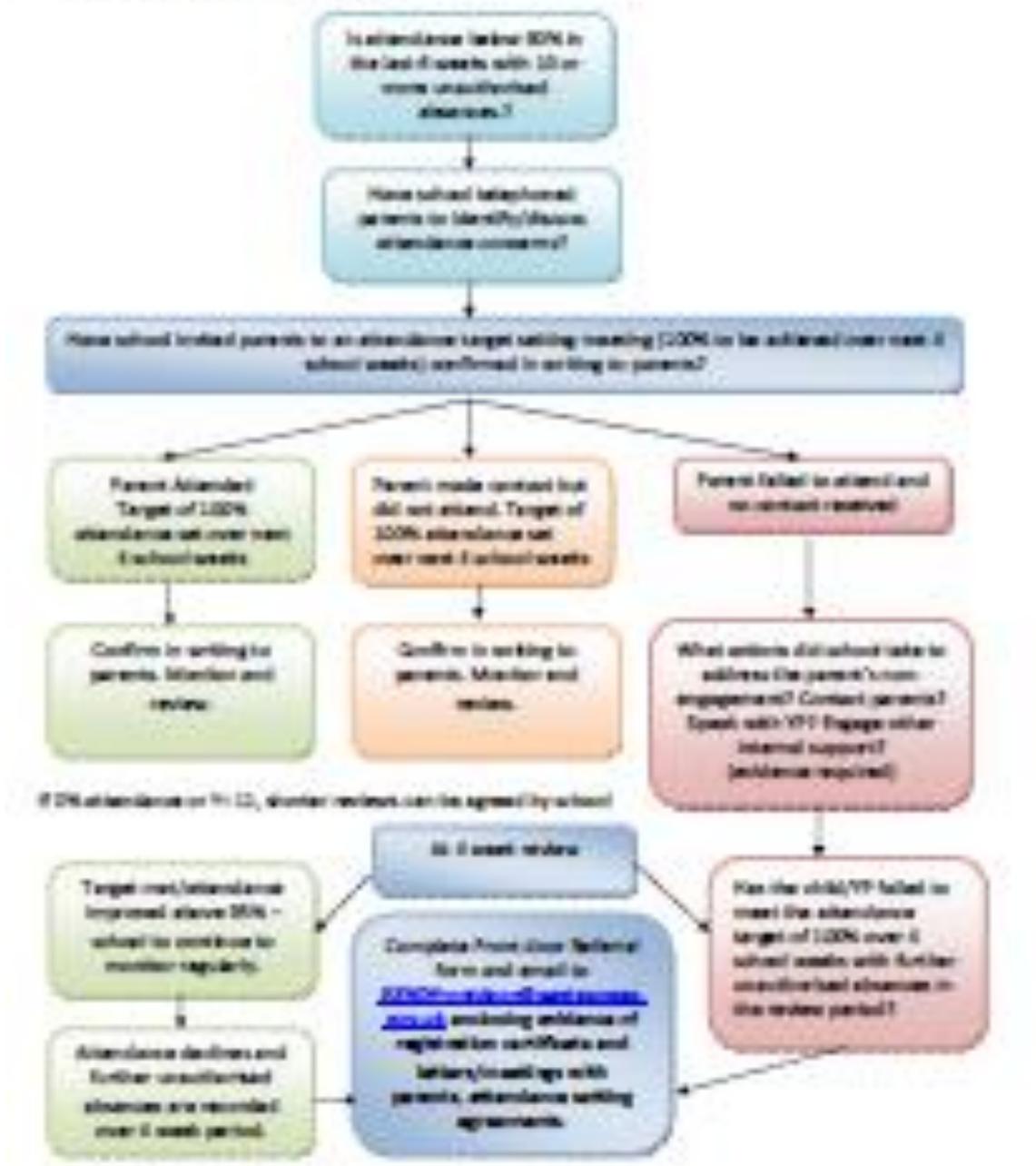
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Appendix 7: ESBAS Flow Chart

THRESHOLD FOR CORE/TRADED ATTENDANCE CASES

School are able to use units to purchase early intervention on attendance without having to have previously addressed attendance concerns with parents. Absences can be authorised/unauthorised for Traded cases. Traded referrals need to be sent to ESBAS@esbasupport.org.uk email address and core referrals sent to SEND Front Desk as shown in the flow chart below.

ESBAS will undertake the intervention at a unit cost agreed with the Area Team Leader. Where a Family Engagement Worker (FEW) is involved it is an expectation that FEW strategies used by the FEW have not improved attendance, that this is then raised with school to consider a referral to ESBAS. NB Where a FEW is involved, School and ESBAS must ensure that the FEW is invited to any meetings and receive copies of any correspondence/updated information.



Attendance Target Met

Well Done
Class Mozart



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Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School

Attendance Award

Class Mozart



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Good Attendance Award

Appendix 10





Sedlescombe Church of England Primary School



Signed: _____