



Attendance Policy

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| Date adopted | December 2016 | Owner | Attendance Officers |
| Last reviewed | May 2018 | Review cycle | Annual |

We firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum attendance and that any problems preventing full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. Full and regular attendance at school is crucial for a child's future life chances and establishes a positive work ethic early in life.

Parents/carers whose children are of compulsory school age (5 to 18) and are registered at a school, are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. If they do not do so they may be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996 and could be liable to prosecution or to be served with a Penalty Notice.

In line with the Education Regulations (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, all unexplained absences of 10 days or more are required to be reported to the Local Authority. Schools are therefore required to report all absence figures to the Local Authority and the DfE and to ensure that they are recorded on a child's annual report. Rates of absence are also taken into account by Ofsted as part of a school's inspection.

Expectations

In order for the schools' Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to pupils at all times. Parents/carers should also support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Attend school punctually.
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day.
- Discuss with their class teacher any problems preventing them from attending school.

We expect that all parents/carers who have day-to-day responsibility for the child will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that the child in their care arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day and has completed any homework they have been given.
- Ensure that they contact the school promptly whenever the child is unable to attend school on the first day of absence and will call in on a daily basis to update the schools of their child's condition, unless otherwise agreed with the school office.
- Contact the schools promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

We expect that school staff will:

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils at least twice daily; at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.
- Monitor every pupil's attendance and publish attendance statistics.
- Contact parents/carers as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Record all reasons for absence and lateness.

- Encourage and reward good attendance in line with whole school attendance targets.
- Make initial enquiries to parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the schools' and Local Authority's expectations with regard to regular school attendance.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service, with whom we monitor and evaluate individual and whole school attendance data.
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection that may lead to non-attendance and to report these concerns to the Attendance Officer as soon as possible.
- Follow up any unexplained non-attendance or lateness with the schools' Attendance Officer and to inform the Attendance Officer of any concerns.

Requests for Leave of Absence

We strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holiday dates which are published a year in advance on the school website, or are available from the school office. The schools do not authorise holidays during term time. If a family feels leave in term time is unavoidable, a Leave of Absence Request Form (which can be obtained from the school office) must be completed at least two weeks prior to the leave date.

A decision whether or not to authorise leave will be made with regard to the following:

- The child's record of attendance (not below 97%).
- The application for Leave of Absence does not exceed the maximum of ten school days in any one year (unless it is felt that the experience would be of beneficial educational value to the child or it is an exceptional circumstance).
- The date and/or length of the application for Leave of Absence and ensuring that it would not prevent the child from missing any important examinations/assessments.
- Please Note: an application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances will not be considered if a request has already been authorised in that academic year (even if the authorised request was only for one day).

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence during term time for their child as a right, and authorisation cannot be given retrospectively.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1st September 2013, the Executive Head Teacher may not authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Executive Head Teacher is required to determine the number of school days that a child may be away from school if leave is granted. All applications for term time absence must be made in writing in advance to the Executive Head Teacher.

Dental and Medical Treatments

Whilst the school will grant requests for absences for dental and medical treatments, parents/carers are encouraged, whenever possible, to book these appointments outside of the school day. When appointments during school hours are unavoidable, the school office should be notified in advance in writing, of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Evidence of the appointment may be requested.

Encouraging Attendance

We encourage regular attendance in the following ways:

- By providing a caring and welcoming learning environment.
- By responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the schools or other pupils.
- By accurate and punctual completion of registers during morning and afternoon registers.
- By celebrating good attendance.
- Our Attendance Officer will monitor pupils with the Education Welfare Service and inform parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, including lateness, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the Education Welfare Service if the irregular attendance continues.

Lateness

If pupils arrive at the schools after the close of the register without a valid explanation, a late mark will be recorded in the class register. If a child arrives after 9.20am without a valid explanation, it will be counted as an unauthorised absence for that session and the pupil's name will be recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- On the first day of absence, if no communication is received from the parent/carer by 9.30am, the school will endeavour to contact them promptly.
- If there is no response, the schools will continue to try to contact the parent/carer.
- Teachers will respond to the persistent low attendance of individual children in their class by meeting with parents/carers. At this meeting the reasons and impacts of low attendance will be discussed and an attendance form completed and shared with ELT.
- If attendance remains low a member of the ELT will meet with parents/carers. At this meeting the reasons and impacts of low attendance will be discussed and an attendance form completed. At this meeting parents/carers will be informed that if the absence persists, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service (EWS).
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the EWS may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

Penalty Notices

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the schools or Education Welfare Officer.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require any further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the school or the Education Welfare Officer.

Parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send the child in their care to a different school, they inform the schools as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received in writing and investigated:

- The dates the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next.
- The address of the new school.
- The new home address, if it is known.

The pupil's school records will then be sent onto the new school as soon as possible. The schools will notify the local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name. In the event that the schools have not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.



Record of Low Attendance Meeting

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|---|-------------------|--|
| Name of Child | Class/ Year group | Date |
| People in attendance Parent/carer Class Teacher/Member of ELT(circle) | | Current Attendance (school target 97%) |

Summary of discussion

Reasons for low attendance

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-
-
-
-

Impact of low attendance

How can school support improved attendance?

How can parent/carer support improved attendance?

How can pupil improve their own attendance?

Signed (parent/carer)_____

Signed (child if appropriate)_____

Signed (staff)_____