

# Attendance Policy



*This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment*

<b>Governors' committee responsible:</b>	Standards
<b>Date approved:</b>	January 2020
<b>Review period:</b>	3 yearly
<b>Next review date:</b>	Spring 2023

The names of all pupils attending the school are entered in the School Admissions Register. The destination of each pupil is entered on SIMS (School Information and Management System) when they leave school.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis. Pupils are expected to attend 100% of the time, unless the absence is authorised by the Headteacher.

Children are expected to arrive at school between 8.45 and 9.00 am. The school day begins at 9.00 and ends at 3.15. Children should be brought into school or directly into classrooms, depending on the age of the child by parents and carers.

If children are late, parents should report to the class teacher and then to the school office with a reason for the late arrival. The register will be closed at 9.05am. After this time attendance is recorded as late (L) and the total amount of minutes that the child was late for will be recorded on SIMs. If a child arrives after 9.30am but before 11am they will be recorded as late using the 'u' code. If a child is **persistently** late then parents' co-operation will be sought to improve lateness, firstly by the class teacher and, if necessary by the Headteacher. Parents of children who are persistently late and have been entered under a 'u' code on the SIMs system will be informed that they may be issued with a penalty notice. Every effort will be made however to find an acceptable solution, for all parties, to this issue before it reaches this stage. Children arriving after 11am will have an 'o' entered in the register meaning that they have been recorded as having an unauthorised absence for that session.

Children who have a medical appointment and arrive at school before 9:30am will be recorded with an 'L' and notice of the appointment will be placed on SIMs. This will therefore not affect their attendance record. If a medical appointment is required during the school day a notice of this will be placed in the register and no action will be taken.

The presence or absence of all pupils is recorded in a class Attendance Register at the beginning of every morning and afternoon session. Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the staff handbook.

Parents should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as sickness they should contact the school before 9am. This should be done on the first morning of absence and on every day of absence thereafter. This information is either conveyed by means of a written note which is signed by the class teacher or the Headteacher, or by a telephone call recorded by a member of the office staff. This information is recorded on SIMs. The school may request parents to provide medical evidence, for example, in the form of a written note from the child's doctor, to support frequent or prolonged absence.

Parents may not authorise their child's absence, only the school can do this on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. (Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason for their child's absence the school will record such absence as unauthorised.)

Parents should not book family holidays during term-time. For any request for absence including holidays parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request Form (available from the school office) at least 3 weeks in advance of the period for which the leave is requested. Leave will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is very happy to discuss individual cases with the family concerned on a one to one basis. If permission is not granted, any such absence will then be recorded as unauthorised (G).

If extenuating circumstances necessitate a child being absent for a longer period of time, the class teacher will discuss with the parents the desirability of carrying out suitable work whilst they are away.

Information on rates of unauthorised absence is included in the school prospectus and in the Headteacher's termly report to governors. New parents are reminded of their responsibilities regarding school attendance, and reminders are issued to all parents when necessary.

If a parent wishes to take a child out of school before the end of the school day, permission must be sought from the Headteacher giving adequate notice.

Children should not be taken from the playground during the school day without the knowledge of the supervisor. Parents should report first to the school office, sign their child off the premises and then a member of staff will bring the child to the school office to meet the parent who should then leave the school premises via the main school entrance.

The Local Authority retains control of the Education Welfare Service and every effort is made to maintain close links with the Education Inclusion Officer (EIO) attached to the school.

The Headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the school's Education Inclusion Officer. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow up actions for both the school and the EIO.

If the school has concerns about a child's attendance or believes that there are safeguarding issues related to attendance then the advice and support of outside agencies will be sought.

Without regular attendance our best educational efforts would come to nothing, and we therefore do everything possible to ensure that the procedures outlined above are adhered to.

Children will be rewarded for excellent attendance with prizes and certificates.

### **Penalty Notices**

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**

Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

**The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.**

Where a child (of compulsory school age) is taken out of school for 5 days (10 sessions) or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken. The school monitors attendance carefully and will make every effort to discuss alternative options with parents/carers before it may reach this stage.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 90% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

**With the exception of authorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**