



Attendance Policy

Approved by:

LGB

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Local Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 In Partnership with the Headteacher, the Home School Link Worker (HSLW) and the Administration Staff

Is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- › Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to the Headteacher and LGB and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher.
- › Working with Surrey Inclusion Officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Claire Marrow is the HSLW and Hayley Roberts is the Admissions and Attendance Officer. They can be contacted via the school office 01483 504172

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Attendance is recorded first thing in the morning and after lunch.

3.6 School Administration Staff

School [administration staff will:

- › Take calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

- › Monitor Studybugs for absence messages and ensure that this is transferred to SIMS.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Call the school or message via Studybugs to report their child's absence before 9am, preferably 8:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with more than 2 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- › Present
- › Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- › Absent
- › Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive on time each school day:

Nursery – 8:50am

Reception – 8:30am

Year 1 – 8:35am

Year 2 – 8:40am

The register for the first session will be taken at each year group's arrival time and will be kept open until for 20 minutes. The register for the second session will be taken at:

Nursery & Reception – 12:45pm

Year 1 & Year 2 – 1:00pm

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or earlier by calling the school absence line or messaging the school via Studybugs.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. The school requires proof of the appointment such as a text message, appointment card or letter.

Parents/Carers can inform the school of appointments by telephoning the school office, emailing infants@stoughton.surrey.sch.uk or via Studybugs.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. If a parent/carer is applying for an leave of absence a request form must be completed in advance of the absence. Request for leave forms are stored in the 'my forms' section of Operoo. Paper copies of the form are also available from the school office. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The school tracks lateness weekly. We will engage with families to see how we can support them in getting their child to school on time.

4.5 Following-up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call, SMS and Studybugs message the pupil's parent/carer on the morning (by 10am) of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will call the sibling's schools if applicable to see if they've had any communication from the family. If by 10:30am the school still haven't heard, we will make a risk assessment and decide whether we need to visit the child's home. If we visit the child's home and there is no answer we may call the police for assistance.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers

The school will report to parents/carers their child's annual attendance at the end of the school year. If a child's attendance is below 90% a parent will be informed.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off, unavoidable events

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via Operoo or paper copies via the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- To attend a wedding or funeral
- A housing crisis which prevents attendance

5.2 Legal Sanctions

There is no longer an entitlement for parents to take children out of school for a leave of absence.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013 states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. To request leave, parents should fill in an Application for Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances form and return it to the Home School Link Worker. (Appendix 3)

In accordance with the above Regulations, requests for Leave of Absence are treated sympathetically, but only in exceptional circumstances can they be approved. The policy of Surrey County Council to which this school has agreed, states that where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and 'Leave of Absence' is without the authority of the Headteacher, **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 may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks.

The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Inclusion Officer 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 unauthorised 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.

If there is an unauthorised Leave of Absence for 5 or more school days, each parent/carer will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices are issued per parent/carer per child and the amount payable is £60.00 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120.00 if paid after 21 days but before 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 38 days, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Making school an wonderful place to be so children enjoy coming and are therefore eager to attend

Reporting half-termly attendance for each class in the newsletter

Reminding parents/carers of the impact of taking their child out of school

7. Attendance Monitoring

The school monitors attendance weekly, analysing reports received via Studbugs. These reports include: persistent absentees, attendance by group e.g. pupil premium and SEND, attendance by registration group and year group. The school looks to see if attendance is improving or declining and decides what action needs to be taken.

The school monitors attendance half termly with a Surrey Inclusion Officer.

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and the HSLW to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- › Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- › Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school and Surrey considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- › Only authorise pupil absence if it is backed up by medical evidence

7.5 Changing Education Provision

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until they are on roll at their new school. The school requires the following information:

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next school
- The address of the new school
- The new home address (if appropriate and known).

If a family are moving to another country we will still require the information above. If the child is statutory school age to the country they are moving to we will contact the new school to check they are on roll at attending.

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Inclusion Officer.

If a parent removes their child from the roll of the school to home educate, the school will notify the Inclusion Officer as soon as we have received written notification from the parent of their intention to home educate.

The Inclusion Officer will then visit the family to ensure parents are aware of their responsibilities and know where to access support.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 2 years by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Parent Code of Conduct

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		

C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day