



St John's C of E Infant School

Attendance Policy

"Attendance is everybody's business"

Date policy agreed by:	Staff	September 2025
	Governors	September 2025
Review date		September 2026

Intent

It is our aim to promote and support our children's learning and enable each one of our pupils to achieve their full potential. We endeavor to provide a school day that excites and motivates each child, and allows them to develop as independent learners. We recognise the importance of good attendance and, alongside good behaviour, make it a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and as such, have high expectations. As a staff we do all we can to encourage families to ensure that the children in our care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

We know that every day lost in education can have a real impact on children's attainment, progress, social skills and wellbeing.

We expect that all pupils will:

Regular

Punctual

Prepared

- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the school day.

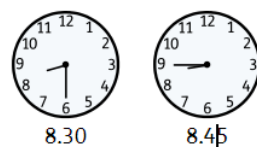
We expect that all parents/carers will:

- encourage and ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure that the child in their care arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day;
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence by 9.00am;
- discuss promptly with their child's class teacher or Headteacher, any problems that deter their child from attending school;
- avoid taking holidays in term time.

We expect our staff will:

Daily Routines

- Staff are ready to meet and greet children at their classroom doors between 8.30 and 8.45
 - The staff will begin to settle children from 8.45-8.50
 - Register will be taken from 8.50 – 9.00
- If the child arrives between the start of the register being taken and before it closes the child will be marked L – late before the register closed.
- The teacher will mark anyone with an N if not present when they close the register.
- If they arrive late after the register closes (9.00) the office staff will sign them in and code attendance as U – Late after register closes (unauthorised).
- Lessons begin promptly at 9.00.
 - Attendance administrator will then make safeguarding welfare checks on anyone who has not arrived at school or given notice before 9 am as to why they are not in attendance at school that day. We will attempt to contact via telephone to all contact numbers we hold. If we are still unable to contact families we will attempt to contact families via email.





- If we do not receive a response, admin staff will inform the DSL and decide the next steps and whether to contact outside agencies e.g. Children's single point of access (C-SPA), police.

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Monitoring

Teachers

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- monitor every child's attendance and question absence when unknown;
- provide a welcoming and safe learning environment for children;
- discuss the current attendance figure at pupil progress meeting with parents;
- raise attendance as an issue at any time and state how it is affecting a pupil.

Attendance administrator - Mrs Janice Batchelor

- ensure SIMS is correctly recorded with codes and reasons for absence daily;
- contact parents as soon as possible when unexplained absence occurs and record reasons for the absence;
- update Headteacher/DSL on any unexplained or prolonged absence;
- inform Headteacher of any requests for absence;
- run a weekly attendance report to provide the Headteacher.

Headteacher/DSL/SENDSCO - Mrs Marion Stevens or Mrs Sophie Ireland

- monitor pupil attendance weekly identifying vulnerable pupils/groups addressing issues quickly;
- monitor persistent and severe absence;
- work with the parents and child if it appears that a child is anxious about coming to school to try and alleviate this anxiety. We will help to formulate a plan, offering strategies to support the individual child;
- meet with the parents of children whose attendance causes concern;
- work with parents and medical professionals as necessary;
- work with the Surrey Attendance Service (SAS) to ensure every child achieves regular attendance;
- discuss attendance at safeguarding meetings;
- report attendance to governor's half termly.

External agencies – Surrey Attendance Service

- have targeted support meetings with the school;
- referrals are made to Surrey Attendance Service to issue penalty notices for pupils taking 10 or more unauthorised absences in the proceeding 10 weeks (5days).

Parents

- will receive attendance figures termly at pupil progress evenings and in the annual report;
- they can request this information at any point from the school office;
- attendance will be discussed when placing a request for absence.

Governors

- will receive attendance data half termly;
- will review the policy and practice as necessary.

Escalation

It is always our aim to support families to develop good attendance habits and we will work with families to remove barriers as much as possible. However, when there is no sign of change and the problems exist despite barriers being removed we will need to take further measures.



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Responding to lateness

When a pupil is late for school they should enter the building via the front office so that their attendance can be recorded correctly. For children arriving between

- 8.50 - 9.00 they will be recorded as L = Late before register closes;
- 9.00 onwards will be recorded as U = Late after register closes (unauthorised).

Persistent lateness will be monitored and the parents will be asked to speak with the Headteacher to see if barriers to arriving on time can be dealt with. If the problem continues a letter will be sent home to parents to inform them of learning time lost and consider further support. If lateness remains a problem a referral may be made to the Attendance Service.

Responding to Non-Attendance

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

- if no email or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9am, the school will endeavor to contact the family first by phone to the main contact numbers we have. We will then try to contact them via email;
- if we have received no contact the Headteacher is informed and safeguarding measures discussed. In some situations, this may involve a home visit from the Headteacher; or contacting children and family services. If there was a concern for anyone being at risk of significant or immediate harm then the police would be contacted;
- if there is persistent non-attendance, the school will keep records of the contact with home during the period of absence and this will be discussed with Surrey Attendance Service;
- if a child has persistent absence and meets the criteria for a Penalty Notice to be issued, or has been taken out of school without the school’s permission for 5 or more days, the school will liaise with Surrey Attendance service to decide whether a Penalty Notice should be issued;
- failure to comply with the expectations set by Surrey Attendance Service may result in further action, an application for an Educational Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

Persistent absences – A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% or below for any reason whether the absences are authorised or not. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 school days; equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. It is expected that schools are monitoring the attendance of children at risk of becoming persistently absent and intervening at the earliest point to identify and resolve any barriers.

Severe absence – This refers to pupils who are absent for 50% or more. Severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support - this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

School Term Dates

The school term dates are published at least a year in advance and we strongly recommend that parents/carers book their family holidays during the scheduled breaks in education. [Surrey Term Dates](#)
[St John's C of E Infant School](#)

In exceptional circumstances when leave in term-time is unavoidable, a “Request for School Absence Form” (Appendix 1) **must** be completed prior to the absence as children missing from school without prior notice is a safeguarding concern. All holidays taken, without prior authorisation will be recorded as unauthorised in the school



register and may require further action to children and family services if we cannot reach you when we try to contact you as to why your child/children is/are not in school.

The form to request an absence can be obtained from the school office or on the school website. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence for their child as a right.

The Headteacher, can authorise leave at their discretion having considered the exceptional circumstances requiring a leave of absence:

- The reason for the request;
- The child's record of attendance must be above 95% before the absence;
- Whether leave has been taken in term time previously;
- The time of the leave, ensuring that it would not prevent the child from missing any important school events;
- They may grant the leave in whole or only part if it is deemed the amount of time requested is beyond that needed of the exceptional circumstances.

Once the school receive the form you will receive confirmation of the outcome. If your child's current attendance is above 90% you will receive an email confirming their current attendance and how the absence will be recorded. If your child has an attendance of below 90% you will receive a phone call to discuss how the absence will be recorded and the impact of further unauthorised absence from school.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 01 September 2013 state that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Surrey County Council guidance gives Headteachers the power to authorise absence only in exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional circumstances, quoted by the Department for Education (DfE), are **service personnel and family crises**. Family holidays taken during term time due to affordability or work restrictions do not meet the DfE criteria for authorisation.

Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School

The issue of a penalty notice will be considered by the Headteacher and governing body where attendance has fallen below 90% and the parents fail to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Surrey Attendance Service.

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school (absence without the agreement of the school or not covered by a medical note) and will be used by Surrey County Council in the following circumstances: -

1. Pupils identified by police and Attendance Advice Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

2. Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more).

Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

3. Finally, the issuing of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance.



This will be considered when a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 10 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.

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 act without delay to secure their regular attendance.

Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice and Consequences for repeat unauthorised absences

1.If you have not incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children in a rolling 3-year period since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, per parent/carers per child, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

2.If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3-year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, per parent/carers per child, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, per parent/carers per child, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £80 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £160 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carers for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996. **Each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child**.

Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement in your child's attendance, please contact your child's school or the Attendance Advice Officer.

Remaining on the school roll

On the advice of Surrey Attendance Service if any parent requests extended leave of absence of more than 20 days, the school will notify the parent in writing that this may result in being taken off-roll. Once leave has started, the school will notify the parent in writing of the expected date of return of that child, and that failure to return to school by that date will result in being taken off-roll. The case will then be referred to Surrey Attendance Service. If the child does not return to school by the date specified the school will take their name off roll.

Changing School

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 the following information has been received and investigated:

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



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 Surrey Attendance Service.



Appendix 1

REQUEST FOR SCHOOL ABSENCE

"Attendance is everybody's business"

Dear Parent/Guardian

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children are in school and we consider, that every day is a valuable opportunity for learning.

All periods of absence must be documented for safeguarding purposes.

Please be aware that the Education Regulations 2013, which became law on 1 September 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Please complete the form below if your child is well, yet not attending school. You must state the reasons for your child being absent from school. **Please state clearly the exceptional circumstances you expect to be considered.** The Headteacher will consider the reasons stated for your request and your child's records will be updated with the reasons for absence.

NAME OF CHILD:CLASS:

1st date of absence: Date of return.....

Total number of school days included in this application:

Has absence been granted already this academic year? If so, how many days?

Exceptional Circumstances (reason) for your request to take your child out of school in term time:

.....

Signed: Date:

For school use:

Current Attendance %:	
Total sessions pupil absent this academic year	
Total unauthorised absence this year:	
Evidence submitted:	Yes / No

Authorised: In full due to exceptional circumstances	Authorised in part: No. of days	Unauthorised
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Action to be taken:

Email family	Telephone call to family	Letter to family	Refer to Admission Service
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Headteacher's signature: Date:

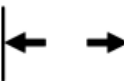
Appendix 2

Appendix 2

School Attendance Codes

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present AM	Present
\	Present PM	Present
B	Educated off site not dual registered Not for pupils receiving online learning within the home	Approved Educational Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another more appropriate code)	Authorised absence
C1*	Leave of absence for regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2*	Leave of absence for a child on a part-time timetable Part-time timetable should only be used as a temporary measure parental consent is required. The timetable should be reviewed frequently.	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday (Not agreed or days more than the agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (not medical appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.	Approved Educational Activity
K*	Alternative provision arranged by the local authority to ensure section 19 duties met.	Approved Alternative Provider
L	Late (before register closes 9am)	Present
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence not covered by any other code	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after register closes after 9am)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity
W	Work Experience	Approved Educational Activity
D	Dual registration (i.e. Pupil attending another establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
X	Untimetabled session for non-compulsory school aged pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1*	Normal transport arrangements unavailable	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2*	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3*	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y4*	Unable to attend due to whole of the school unexpectedly being closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5*	Unable to attend due to being criminally detained	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6*	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7*	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Attendance Policy Page

	%	percentage attendance	→ 1 2 3	level of Concern		Actions
5		below 79% attendance		Extreme risk at least 22 days of absence		Escalation measures will be implemented and outside agencies involved
4	80%	85% - 80%		High risk of underachievement		A plan will be in place for home and school to work together to improve attendance and remove barriers
3	85	89% - 85%		Persistent absence Cause for concern		How can we help? School will be speaking with parents and children. Do they need medical support? Do they need emotional support?
2	90%	94% - 90%		Could do better		a few school days missed means lost learning
1	100%	100% - 95%		Excellent attendance		Celebrate, all learning opportunities are being achieved