



Attendance Policy

(SCC Model Policy)

<i>Presented to Governor Sub Committee</i>	<i>HRW</i>
<i>Lead SMT</i>	<i>ASR/SJK</i>
<i>Approved by Governing Body on:</i>	<i>Autumn 17</i>
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The Ashcombe School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

SCC Model Policy

The staff of The Ashcombe School are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, students, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud.

Research has shown that, for all students, regular attendance at school is the key to an individual's social, emotional and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will insist that parents/carers ensure that their children achieve 100% attendance and any problems which may prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. Full attendance secures, for each child, their entitlement to be safe, to enjoy their education and to achieve their potential, to be healthy and to participate fully in their community.

Parental responsibility and the law

By law parents/carers, who have a child of compulsory school age, are responsible for ensuring that the child attends school regularly. If this is not the case the parent may be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996 and could be liable to prosecution or to be served with a penalty notice. This means that there should be no unauthorised absence and if a child is ill then the school must be informed immediately.

Registers

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Registration and Lateness

It is expected that children will arrive at school on time and be on site by 8.45 a.m. The school day begins with registration at 8.55 a.m.

If pupils arrive at school after 9 a.m. a late mark will be recorded and if a child arrives after 9.30 a.m., without a valid explanation, it will be recorded 'as late after close of register' and counted as an unauthorised absence for that session. The pupil's name will be recorded in case of a fire drill.

In cases of persistent late arrival to school, the school will contact the parent and place the pupil on punctuality report. Sanctions are likely to also be issued.

Responding To Non-Attendance

Initial actions

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school by 9 a.m. if a child will be absent for any reason.

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

- if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.45 a.m. the school will endeavour to contact them that day by phone, text message or e-mail
- contact will continue to be made until a response is obtained
- if this continues to be a problem the school will try to make contact with the parent/carer on every subsequent day of absence
- if, by the third day, there has still been no contact made, the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers and invite them into school to discuss their concerns and the reasons for the absence

- 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.

Frequent absence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend it is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s by a:

- phone call to the parent by the Head of Year (HoY) and issues will be discussed with the student
- letter that will be sent to the parents stating concerns
- meeting that will be held at school with the HoY.

Education Welfare meets with school staff on a regular basis to discuss attendance concerns. If school are unsuccessful in resolving the issues the school will refer to Education Welfare.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Any absence has an impact on a child's educational achievement and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The DfE and the Local Authority monitor the levels of PA children and levels of absence in all schools.

Attendance of all pupils is tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic monitoring because absence affects attainment.

Parents will be informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance.

Request for leave of absence

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013, states that headteacher's 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.

In general absence in term time is to be avoided and will be considered to be unauthorised leave of absence. However, in exceptional circumstances, and having received written application by the parent to the Headteacher the absence *may* be authorised. All written requests will be carefully considered and may involve a conversation between the school and the parent at the time of the application if further clarification is needed.

Any appeal will be heard by the Governing Body, whose decision will be final.

All other requests for leave will be considered on a case by case basis by the Governing Body that may, at its discretion, delegate some decisions to the Headteacher. Again, the decision of the Governing Body will be final.

To request absence in term-time then an Application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances Form must be completed prior to the leave date and preferably at least two weeks before. This form can be

obtained from the school office, Pupil Services or online and should be returned to Mrs Reed, Deputy Headteacher. (*see Appendix 1*)

Where a child is taken out of school during term time for 5 days or more without the authority of the Headteacher, see Penalty Notice for further information below.

Penalty Notice

The Headteacher, acting in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. the Surrey County Council Code of Conduct, 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 before 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices 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 school or Education Welfare Officer
- where a child is taken out of school during term time for 5 days or more without the authority of the Headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child. A warning will not be given as parents will have been advised via parent mail about the issuing of penalties and this policy
- pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences
- where attendance has fallen below 90% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the half-term (this can include late arrival after the close of registration where the U symbol has been used denoting unauthorised absence). The lateness will be recorded in accordance with the 'Registration and Lateness' section of this policy.

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

Dental and Medical Treatments

Whilst the school will grant requests for absence for dental and medical treatments, parents/carers are encouraged, whenever possible, to book medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. When appointments during school hours are unavoidable the tutor should be notified in advance in writing of the date and time of the appointment, including when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Evidence of the appointment may be requested. The child should sign in and out of school at the Pupil Service Desk and will show the parent letter, which will contain the Tutors signature, as evidence of approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Education Welfare Officer

- monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis
- works with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.
- If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school then the school will make a referral to Education Welfare. The EWO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the EWO can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution.

- Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

Governing Body and Headteacher

- Promote the attendance policy and ensure that it is implemented effectively.
- Ensure that school has a system to reward good attendance and punctuality and systematically follows up poor attendance and punctuality.

Pastoral Senior Leaders

Promote good attendance and punctuality and will:

- ensure all procedures are in place and will monitor a) the procedures and processes and b) pupil attendance and punctuality
- ensure Heads of Year are able to carry out their responsibilities
- liaise with support staff to ensure recording and monitoring is fully in place
- liaise with pupils and parents to ensure difficulties are addressed
- give full support the Education Welfare Service and Truancy Patrol

Heads of Year will:

- ensure attendance and punctuality procedures are fully implemented
- support and encourage pupils and communicate with parents
- track attendance systematically and follow up appropriately
- reward those who maintain high standards in attendance and punctuality.
- ensure tutors are fully briefed and trained to carry out their duties

Referrals will be prepared for the Senior Leaders in cases where there are concerns.

Tutors will:

- promote good attendance and punctuality
- comply fully with the schools procedures and expectations
- inform the HOY where there are concerns and will support and liaise with the pupil and parent
- reward those who achieve high standards

All staff

Encourage good attendance and punctuality and will support the procedures set by the school to record and report attendance and punctuality.

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully.

Pupils are expected to attend 100% of the time unless the absence has been authorised by the Headteacher (or delegated member of staff). As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

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

Please complete and submit this form if you wish the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to back up your request. You should return the form for the attention of Mrs Reed, Deputy Headteacher, either by 'pupil post', Royal Mail or email with the completed form attached. If your son/daughter brings the form into school it should be handed into the Pupil Services Desk.

All requests should be submitted to the School at least **two** weeks before the first day of intended absence. Permission will not be given if it is applied for after the absence has taken place.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices are issued by the Headteacher in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child, per parent/carer and if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and will notify you of the decision. For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

Name of child:	T.G.
I am applying for leave of absence for my child	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:	
Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO	
If YES, please give dates and details:	
I also have children at (please name the school) ...	
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:

Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Explanatory notes:

Signed:	Deputy Headteacher (on behalf of the Headteacher)	Date:
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Email address : (for school response)