



SURREY STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning for life at Surrey Street where the social, emotional, spiritual, physical and learning needs of every member of the school community are met

Attendance Policy

January 2024

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Non-Statutory

Surrey Street Primary is committed to promoting and respecting the health, safety and wellbeing of all our children and any adults who work in our school

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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](#)

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- 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

3.3 The Attendance Officer

- The attendance officer 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
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Provide regular attendance reports and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher

3.5 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.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

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

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day that the school is open
- Call or email the school to report their child's absence 9am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time

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 in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.05am and will be kept open until 9.20am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45pm and will be kept open until 1pm for KS1. For KS2 the register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

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 as soon as practically possible by calling / emailing the school office.

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

Where the absence is longer than 3 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

For the week prior to half term, we may ask for medical evidence if there are doubts about the illness. A home visit may be carried out. We will not carry out home visits or request additional / 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 medical evidence is seen.

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. Parents must complete a **Request for leave of absence from school during term time** form. See **appendix 2**.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Morning registration time at Surrey Street Primary is 9.05am. Doors open at 8.45am. It is very important for all the children to be on time as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling both for the child and the rest of the class.

9.05am - Registration

9.06am – 9.20am - L code as late to school before the register closes

After 9.20am - U code as late to school after the register closes

The following time is lost through lateness:

Minutes late per day:	Equivalent of missing:
5 minutes	3.4 school days a year
10 minutes	6.9 school days a year
15 minutes	10.3 school days a year
20 minutes	13.8 school days a year
30 minutes	20.7 school days a year

4.5 Arriving Late Procedure

The school has a legal duty and is accountable for all children's attendance, so we will require a reason why your child is late to school.

If your child arrives late to school please report to the school office, to sign in your child. Every parent / carer will be asked to provide a the reason for lateness

4.6 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning 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 may conduct a home visit.

- 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 – this is usually after 5 school days. This may be escalated sooner should any safeguarding concerns arise.

4.7 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels.

Attendance book marks are sent home every half term to make parents/carers aware of their child's attendance percentage.

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 '**extremely exceptional circumstances**', and only typically for 1 – 2 day(s), as in line with all other schools. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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 in accordance with any leave of absence request form. The headteacher may require evidence or travel details to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental 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/carers belong.
- 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

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Surrey Street Primary School we raise attendance awareness through assemblies. Each Friday, classes with good attendance results are read out in assembly. Classes with good attendance are rewarded with a giant £10.00 token, which can be used for 'special class treats/games/resources for their class'.

At the end of the academic year those children with 100% attendance will receive a 100% certificate and a prize. These will be given out in assembly.

Rewards are given out for most improved attendance. This is not necessarily given to pupils with attendance at the school target of 97% but it is for children who have shown significant improvement in their attendance since the last term.

7. Attendance monitoring

We are committed to supporting your child effectively to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore the best life chances. All challenges made concerning persistent absences will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Part 7 of [The Education Act 1996](#) places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

- Attendance is inputted and updates daily
- Children causing concern will be discussed along with actions taken and progress towards targets
- All parents receive a letter if attendance falls below **95%**
- Children with attendance less than 95% are identified as causing concern
- Children who are regularly late are also identified as causing concern

Where absence is becoming persistent Surrey Street Primary is committed to building strong relationships and supporting pupils and families in coming to school. We will

support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners will work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need.

This includes:

- Meeting with pupils and parents at risk or persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them.
- Making referrals to services and organisations that can provide support.

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:

- 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/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) 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

Procedures for when attendance is causing concern.

Parents/carers will be required to attend a supportive attendance meeting in school with the attendance officer.

The pupil's attendance/punctuality will be monitored until it is no longer a concern.

If a child's absence remains a cause of concern, then a referral to the local authority will be made.

The Local Authority will meet with parents and school and any other professionals, such as the school nurse, to discuss absence issues.

If parents/carers fail to attend meetings to discuss attendance issues and attendance does not improve within a specific time, the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice.

Further absence of lateness could result in further court action from the Local Authority.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years. 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

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

SURREY STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL



Request for Leave of Absence from School During Term Time

This form should be completed and returned before making any travel arrangements

To be completed by Parent/Carer:

Pupil's Name: _____ Class: _____

Address: _____

Ethnicity: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Date of absence request – From: _____ To: _____

Reason for application: _____

Parent/Carer details:

First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Address (if different to above): _____

Contact Number: _____ Date of application: ___ / ___ / ___

I have read the leave of absence information overleaf

Parent/Carer signature: _____

SCHOOL TO COMPLETE

Current Attendance: _____ Number of days requested: _____

(Must be at least 95%)

If the child has had previous term time leave, please state dates and number of days taken

Traveling abroad?

Yes / No Country: _____ Return date: _____

Leave: AGREED / DECLINED

Proof of return date (ticket/email etc) _____

Copy to Education Welfare Service: Yes / No

Leave of Absence

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations make clear that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Guidance Notes for Parents

1. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully. An application in writing must be sent to the Headteacher in time for the request to be considered well before the desired period of absence.

Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.

2. The Department for Education makes it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.

4. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. In considering a request, the school will take account of the following factors which may help to reach a decision: -

- the exceptional circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
- time of the academic year when the leave has been requested
- duration of the absence – number of school days being missed
- the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
- the child's current attendance and punctuality rate and overall attendance pattern
- exceptional term time leave requested/taken in previous academic years for a similar purpose
- whether the parent made the request in advance
- pupils due to take any statutory testing arrangements (KS2 SATS, Y1 Phonics and KS1 SATs) will not normally be granted leave of absence.
- Whether parent/carers have considered limiting the amount of time the child would be absent from school e.g. wrapping around school holiday
- Have alternative care arrangements been considered by the parent/carer to limit the time away from school
- Impact on any interventions, assessments or referrals being undertaken with the child or family e.g. family support, social care assessments, CAMHS, SEN
- The impact that the absence will have on the child.

5. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

6. Should the school decide not to grant leave of absence and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This action may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent* per child. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.

Examples of any exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time are as listed on our school website