



The Newlands CofE Federation

A partnership of Shere and Clandon Schools

Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

The school staff and governors firmly believe that all pupils benefit from full school attendance. To this end we will do all we can to encourage families to ensure that the children in their care achieve the maximum possible attendance (100%) and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

The Executive Headteacher is the school's strategic attendance lead.

Day-to-day attendance monitoring is delegated to the School Office and Inclusion Officer.

2. Expectations

2.1 We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day, punctually and prepared appropriately for the day.
- Discuss with their class teacher or the school office any problems that may deter them from attending school.

2.2 We expect that all parents or carers who have day to day responsibility for the children will:

- encourage daily school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that the child in their care arrives at school punctually each day, prepared for the school day.
- contact the school on the first day of a child's absence by phone or email. We like to know the nature of the illness and the day the child is expected to be able to resume their studies.
- discuss promptly with their child's class teacher or senior staff, any problems that deter their child from attending school.
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.
- meet with the appropriate person to discuss persistent absence.
- not take holidays in term time.

2.3 We expect that the school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, in the morning and afternoon.
- monitor every child's attendance using SIMS and CPOMS, as appropriate.

- contact parents as soon as possible when a child is absent where no message has been received.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain an explanation for the absence.
- make initial enquiries of parents or carers of children who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's expectation with regard to regular school attendance.
- meet with the schools' Inclusion Officer regularly to discuss any new concerns and report on the progress of existing cases.
- meet with the parents/carers of children whose attendance causes concern.

3. Encouraging attendance

The Newlands CE Federation encourages regular attendance by,

- providing a school day that excites, challenges, and motivates each child, respects child development and promotes children's mental health.
- responding promptly to a child's or a parent's concerns about the school or other pupils.
- monitoring attendance on a regular basis.
- the office is able to administer medicines to children who have long term medical needs as well as antibiotics once a child is well enough to attend school.
- the office is able to administer paracetamol where parental consent has not been withdrawn and with verbal consent on the day.

The federation recognises that emotional wellbeing, anxiety and emotionally based school avoidance may affect attendance. Where this is identified, the school will work with families and external agencies to identify barriers and implement appropriate support.

4. Responding to non-attendance

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

- If no email or telephone call is received from the parent/carer the school will endeavour to contact them.
- The school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer and invite them to school to discuss their concerns.
- The school will monitor attendance, informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring to the Inclusion Officer if the irregular attendance continues. Medical evidence may be requested where a child has been absent for 4 consecutive days or more due to illness OR where a child's attendance is below 90% and/or a child is regularly away from school due to illness. Examples include appointment letters, prescriptions, pharmacy labels, discharge summaries or other documentation from a healthcare professional.
- Failure to provide evidence when requested may result in the absences being unauthorised.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Inclusion Officer may result in further action or an application for an Education Supervision Order.

- The school will follow statutory Children Missing Education procedures where a child's whereabouts cannot be established.

5. Penalty Notices

The school operates in line with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices. A Penalty Notice is a legal sanction and may be issued where a parent/carer fails to ensure their child's regular attendance at school.

A Penalty Notice will be requested by the school and issued by the Inclusion Service on behalf of the Local Authority.

The amount payable is:

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days
- £120 per parent, per child if paid between 22–28 days

Failure to pay within 28 days will normally result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

5.1 When a Penalty Notice will be issued

The school will request a Penalty Notice in the following circumstances:

Unauthorised Leave of Absence (Term-Time Holidays)

- Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions (5 school days) or more without authorisation from the Headteacher.
- In these cases, a Penalty Notice will be issued without further warning, where it is clear that parents were aware that the leave would not be authorised.
- Each parent will receive a separate Penalty Notice for each child.

Irregular Attendance / Unauthorised Absence

- Where a pupil has 7 or more unauthorised sessions within a 6-week period, the school will normally request a Penalty Notice.
- This includes:
 - Unauthorised absence
 - Persistent lateness after the close of registration (after 9.15am)
- In most cases, parents will receive a formal written warning (Notice to Improve) prior to a Penalty Notice being issued.
- If there is no improvement within the specified timeframe, a Penalty Notice will be requested.

Failure to Engage with Support

- Where parents fail to engage with support offered by the school or Inclusion Service to improve attendance, this will strengthen the case for issuing a Penalty Notice.

Truancy

- Pupils found in a public place during school hours without justification may result in a Penalty Notice being issued following involvement from the Local Authority or police.

5.2 Lateness

- Arrival after the close of register (9.15am) is recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Repeated occurrences will contribute to the threshold for a Penalty Notice.
- Where patterns of lateness persist, the school will escalate in line with this policy, which may include a Penalty Notice.

5.3 Exclusions

Where a child is excluded from school, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours for the first five days of exclusion. Failure to comply will result in a Penalty Notice being issued under Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

6. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level means children are missing 19 days or more a year of schooling, equivalent to half a day each week. It is likely that this level of absence will cause considerable harm to any child's educational prospects, and we expect families to work with the school to improve attendance as a priority.

We monitor all absence thoroughly and children who are persistently absent are tracked and monitored carefully by the Executive Headteacher.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent absence.
- Liaise regular with families during periods of absence, including inviting families to attend meetings to discuss this.
- Identify barriers to school attendance.
- Offer support strategies including access to nurture provision as appropriate.

7. Severe Absenteeism (SA):

Severe absence is defined as a pupil who misses 50% or more of school, at this level of absence a child cannot be expected to make progress in line with their peers and this is detrimental to their future life and employment prospects.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services for child and family to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Analyse and evaluate the impact of strategies to help the child reintegrate back into school.

- Once back in school, identify key interventions to support lost learning.

8. Changing schools:

If a family decides to send their child to a different school, it is important that they inform school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from either 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 relevant

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

9. Illness

If a child is unable to attend school because they are ill, parents or carers should contact the relevant school on the first day of the absence by 9.15am, either in person, by telephone or email, and inform the school if the absence is likely to extend beyond a day. Other reasons for absence can be discussed with the school each time. An authorised absence may be granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g., bereavement). A Request for Exceptional Leave of Absence (Appendix 1) for these absences should be completed in advance wherever possible.

10. Dental and medical appointments:

Whilst either school will grant requests for absence for dental and medical treatments during school time, 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 relevant school should be notified of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Evidence of the appointment may be requested in certain instances.

11. Pupils leaving the premises during the school day:

Wherever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside school time. If this is unavoidable, parents or carers must report to the school office to sign the pupil out and inform the school when they will return.

12. Lateness:

Lateness is actively discouraged, and regular lateness is unacceptable. At Shere lessons begin promptly at 8.40am. At Clandon lessons begin at 8.45am. It is important that pupils arrive in good time for the start of lessons as some of the most valuable learning takes place in the very first session of the day. Please note that if pupils arrive after 9.00am they will be recorded as late. School registers are closed at 9.15am and pupils arriving after this time will

be recorded as 'late after close of register', which counts as an unauthorised absence for that session.

13. Requests for leave of absence during term time:

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence during term-time for their child as a right and authorisation cannot be given retrospectively. Permission for absence during term time is at the school's discretion and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

If a family needs to request absence in term-time then a Request for Exceptional Leave of Absence (Appendix 1) should be obtained from the school office or downloaded from the website, completed and submitted to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher may consult with the Chair of Governors, the Inclusion Officer and other local schools (in cases where leave has also been requested for siblings) and will then decide whether or not to authorise the absence requested. Each request will be considered separately and a decision made, based on the reasons for each request.

The school holiday dates, and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published well in advance and are available from the school offices and on the school websites. Family holidays need to be booked within the school holiday dates. Family holidays are not deemed exceptional circumstances. In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will **not** be authorised.

14. Review:

The Governing Body first adopted this policy in September 2021. It will be reviewed biennially as necessary.

The Safeguarding Committee is responsible for the review of this policy. This policy is based on a template from Surrey Country Council.

Date of last review: Summer 2026

Date for next review: Summer 2027



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Request to authorise absence from school due to exceptional circumstances

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from school you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional.

Please note: There is no general right to authorise absence for a family holiday. If you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised, and we will consider legal action. You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered.

Section A: To the Headteacher:

I wish to apply for

Child's name _____ Child's Class _____

To be authorised as absent from school (please include dates and times):

from _____ to _____ - (inclusive dates)

if your child has siblings for whom you are also applying for a leave of absence please enter their name and school below:

Name(s) _____ School(s) _____

Section B: Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the circumstances which make your application exceptional; and therefore the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday your child has from school. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements. If you require additional space, please continue on the other side of the page.

Section C: I am the parent/carers with whom the pupil normally resides. The information I have given on this form is correct.

Signature (parent/carers): _____ Date: _____

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have been amended (as of 1st September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (Headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carers 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 consider a prosecution for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Section D: For school use only.

Tick as appropriate:

- ☐ Request approved for _____ number of days from the dates and times
- ☐ A personal discussion with you is requested. Please contact the school office
- ☐ Request not approved as the circumstances are not considered to constitute an exceptional reason and/or the impact of this absence will affect your child's educational progress.

Headteacher: _____ Date: _____

Current attendance rate: _____

Continuation of section B (if required)