



Horsell C of E (voluntary aided) Junior School

At Horsell C of E Junior School we believe we are all 'made in the image of God'. Through a commitment to Christian values and high academic aspirations, we strive to provide a rich and inclusive education for every member of our school family.

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2023-2024	
Date adopted:	November 2014
Author/ Owner:	Celia Wand
Approved by:	Anne Smith
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Due for review:	September 2024

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

“Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:25

The staff at Horsell Church of England Junior School are committed to promoting the education and welfare of children through regular school attendance. The school staff, alongside the Diocese and LA, knows that every day lost to education can have a serious impact on children’s attainment and overall progress in school. We are therefore fully committed to promoting school attendance by providing an environment and ethos where children feel safe and can build positive relationships with their peers and where they will want to learn.

We do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the children in their care achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. As a school we work closely with families to support regular attendance. We also have access to further support from the Education Inclusion Service.

The school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead analyses and monitors patterns and trends of attendance and attendance is reviewed in the school’s weekly safeguarding meetings.

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss with their class teacher/member of staff any problems preventing them from attending school

We expect that all parents and carers will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- make sure their child/ren attend school regularly and on time
- let the school know about any concerns or problems
- Ensure that they contact the school office whenever the child/children are unable to attend school. Families should either telephone the school or send an email on the first day of absence by 8 40am and every day subsequently the children are not in school, unless a return date has been agreed.

School staff will:

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality of all pupils twice daily
- Monitor all pupils’ attendance and punctuality
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- Provide a stimulating and safe learning environment
- Respond promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils
- Contact families on the first morning of absence where no message has been received to explain the absence. If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made, the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers or invite them into school to discuss their concerns. The school will tell parents that if the absence persists that a referral will be made to the Education Inclusion Service.

- Maintain daily contact with families if there is an ongoing concern about attendance
- Make initial enquiries to parents/carers of pupils who are attending irregularly, to express their concern and to clarify the school's and the LEA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- Arrange a meeting between the family and Head Teacher, and in appropriate cases the Education Inclusion Service, to discuss concerns and seek to redress them.
- Refer on-going irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Inclusion Service
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Inclusion service may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.
- Meet, where possible, the requirements of the UN Convention – The Rights of the Child, by ensuring that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them.

Parent Responsibility and The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) To any special needs he/she may have (either by regular attendance at school or otherwise).

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act. Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school. Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (Ss 434 and 458) and the The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013) 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 [attendance out of school]. 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.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This includes:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Registration and Lateness

Teachers plan learning activities from 8 30am every day. Lateness can therefore have a significant impact on pupils' progress, and it can cause disruption for other learners.

The school day begins at 8.30am. Class registers close at 8 50am. Registers will remain open in the office until 9.15am. Any pupil who arrives after the gates are shut at 8.40am and after class teachers have taken registers but before the close of registers at 9.15am will need to sign in at the office and they will be marked present but recorded as late (marked L in the register). Any pupil arriving after 9.15am should also sign in at the office and will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (u code) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. A penalty notice may be issued if a child incurs 7 or more U codes in a six-week period – see penalty notices below.

Afternoon registers are taken at 1 00pm.

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 in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse. Surrey County Council Inclusion Officer (formerly known as EWOs) meets with school staff on a half termly basis to discuss attendance concerns. 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

- Phone call to parent and issues discussed with pupil within school.
- Letter sent to parents stating concerns.

- Meeting at school with the Inclusion Leader or member of the Senior Leadership Team. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to The Inclusion Service.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when, as per Ofsted Criteria, they miss 10% (i.e. 90% or less attendance) or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is considerably damaging to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark (i.e. below 90%) is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system.

Parents will be notified by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and be invited to a meeting where an action plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.

Children who are persistently absent are referred to the Surrey County Council Inclusion Officer.

Leave of Absence

The school's Governing Body has decided that **NO leave of absence will be** authorised in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been clearly shared with the Head Teacher **prior** to the leave being booked. It is the Head Teacher's decision whether or not the circumstances are exceptional. **Parents must complete a Leave of Absence request form (see Appendix One) at least two weeks' before the proposed absence.**

If leave of absence is taken without permission it will be recorded as unauthorised, and the school may request the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1st September 2013, states that Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more which do not have to be consecutive may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the parent/carer being served a summons to appear at the Magistrates Court. No written warning will be given where it can be shown that the parent/carer had previously been warned of their liability to receive a Penalty Notice.

The issuing of a Penalty Notice for poor attendance may also be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

Unauthorised absences or late arrival after the close of registration, on 7 occasions in any six-week period (not including school closures). The liable parent/carer will receive a written warning from the Inclusion Service of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to affect an improvement. During this period the pupil is not expected to incur any further unauthorised absence. Where a formal warning letter has been issued to parents, the Local Authority will monitor the attendance for a maximum of 15 school days and issue a Penalty Notice by first class post if the Local Authority determine that an acceptable level of attendance has not been achieved.

Pupils, identified by Police and Inclusion Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols, who have incurred unauthorised absence: The liable parent/carer will receive a written warning from the Inclusion Service of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given a maximum of 15 school days to affect an improvement. During this period the pupil is not expected to incur any further unauthorised absence. Where a formal warning letter has been issued to parents, the Local Authority will monitor the attendance for a maximum of 15 school days and issue a Penalty Notice by first class post if the Local Authority determine that an acceptable level of attendance has not been achieved.

When an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours within the first 5 school days of an exclusion without justifiable reason: No written warning will be given where it can be shown that the parent/carer had previously been warned of their liability to receive a Penalty Notice.

Removal from Roll

If a child is away for more than four consecutive weeks without prior knowledge and following intensive enquiries and advice given from the Education Inclusion Service their name will be removed from the school roll.

Changing schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child/children to a different school that they inform Horsell Church of England Junior school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from our 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 it is 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 the Education Inclusion Service.

Linked policies:

- Online Safety policy
- Positive behaviour policy
- SEND information report

- Anti bullying policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Horsell C of E Junior School

Application for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances 2022 - 2023

Please read the following guidance carefully.

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, 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 and submit this form if you want the Headteacher to consider your request for your child's leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. We may ask for proof to validate your request.

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

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority considering legal proceedings against you 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:	Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for	
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...	
Signed: (Parent/Carer)	Date:

Address :

To be completed by the Headteacher

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: (Headteacher) Date: