



**Fetcham
Village
Infant
School**

Committee Responsible :	Community and Welfare
Approved by Governors :	Autumn 2023
Next Review Date :	Autumn 2024

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The staff of Fetcham Village Infant School are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, pupils, governors and the Local Authority (LA), to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud.

The school staff, alongside the LA, firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. Good attendance at school is important for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. To this end, we will 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.

We know that every day lost to education can have an impact on a child's attainment and overall progress in school.

The school aims to

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to maximise learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parent/carers aware of their legal requirements.

We expect that all pupils will:

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

We expect parents/carers to:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure their child arrives punctually and well prepared for the school day;
- contact the school promptly whenever any problems occur that may keep the child away from school,
- make every effort to arrange medical appointments outside school hours;
- contact the office by email or telephone by 9.30am on the first day their child is unable to attend and notify the office in advance of dental and medical appointments in writing that are unable to be arranged outside school hours;
- provide an absence note on the child's return to school.

We expect that school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- monitor every pupil's attendance;
- encourage good attendance;
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children;
- provide a safe learning environment;
- provide a high quality education for children;
- provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns;
- make initial enquiries to parents/carers about pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance.
- operate a 'First Day Absence' call if no message has been received by 10am;
- follow up all unexplained absences supported by outside agencies such as Home School Link Worker, Surrey Inclusion Officer or Social Services if needed;

Other measures to encourage good attendance:

- the Head teacher will carry out regular monitoring on attendance and punctuality and hold meetings with parents/carers if needed;
- the Head teacher and Inclusion Officer will hold discussions where attendance falls below 90% or where irregular and unjustified patterns of attendance are identified;

Arrival and Registration

We lay a great deal of importance on the need to be punctual and to arrive in school on time. Not only does it make for a good start to the day but it shows consideration for everyone else in the class and avoids wasting valuable learning time.

All children must be in school ready for register at 9.00am each day although children are able to enter the classroom from 8.50am when doors open. The register is taken twice a day. If a child arrives after the registration period he/ she must be accompanied to the school office by a parent/ carer and will be marked in as late. Registers close at 9.05am and 1.20pm. Arrival after 9.30am will result in an unauthorised absence unless the reason is authorised by the Headteacher. Lateness is monitored by the Head teacher and Inclusion Officer.

The Law and school attendance:

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

Appendix 1 explains circumstances where a penalty notice may be issued.

Changing School

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform Fetcham Village Infant School staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received in writing:

- 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 pupils' school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible and within ten days of the child leaving. The Pupil Tracking Office at County Hall will also be sent appropriate information within ten days of anyone leaving or joining the school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Inclusion Service.

Approvals

<i>Mrs Cath Garel</i> <i>Chair of Governors</i>
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<i>Mr Simon Sharp</i> <i>Headteacher</i>

Penalty Notices

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council 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 within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

Pupils identified by police and inclusion officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

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

Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent/carer** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents/carers had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

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

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 90% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.