



Shottermill Junior School

Attendance Policy

Nominated Lead Member of Staff:

Headteacher / Attendance Leader

Status & Review Cycle:

Statutory (Every 2 years)

Next Review Date:

Autumn 2025

Introduction

At Shottermill we will do all we can to encourage parents and guardians to ensure that the children in their care achieve the maximum possible school attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon. This Policy has been shared with the school's Inclusion Officer for approval as well as with Governors.

This Attendance Policy has been written in accordance with the latest DfE guidance: **Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities Published: May 2022 Applies from: September 2022**. This document states that all maintained schools must have an Attendance Policy within their school, which should be made available to parents via the school website or in hard copies, if requested. This Policy also links to **The Equality Act 2010** and as a school the following equalities objectives have been published to show how we are committed to ensuring a fully inclusive working and learning environment for all:

- **Provide all children with appropriate access to learning experiences at our school and not disadvantage any child from taking part on the grounds of their gender, ethnicity, background or culture, Special Educational Need or Disability, or any other discriminatory factor.**
- **Provide a secure and supportive environment that empowers people to challenge discrimination should they encounter it.**
- **Ensure that any person visiting or working within our school environment does not suffer discrimination.**
- **Ensure prospective employees are treated fairly and do not suffer any form of discrimination in line with fair recruitment purposes.**
- **Promote and celebrate diversity of children and adults who visit or work within our school and promote equality through our actions and communications.**
- **Provide systems of monitoring to facilitate continuous improvement, learning and sharing of existing good practice, as overseen by the Governing Body and Local Authority.**
- **Work with all stakeholders or other local schools to develop cohesive communities with shared values that encompass equal opportunities.**
- **Work towards the elimination of discrimination and harassment through upholding our Core Values of: *Respect, Trust, Love of Learning, Communication, Creativity and Excellence.***

Expectations, Roles and Responsibilities

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher (or other member of staff) any problems that deter them from attending school.

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day-to-day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- Ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is unable to attend school;
- Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence and every subsequent day of absence;
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

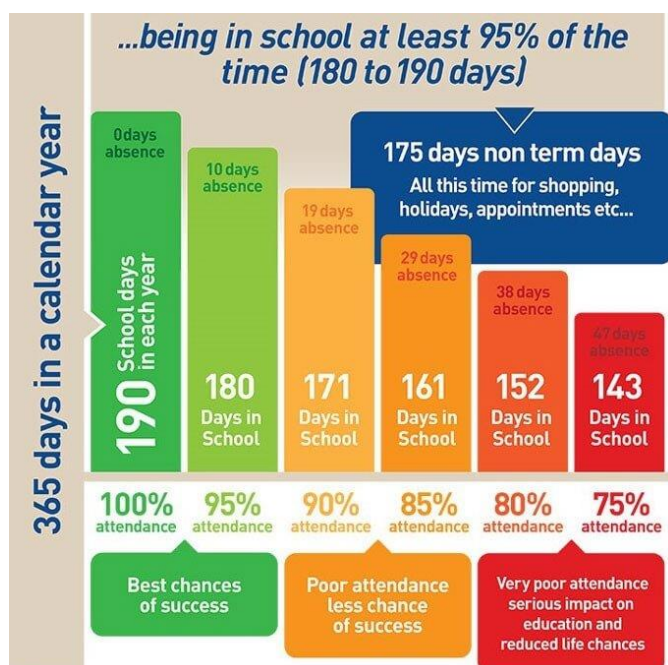
We expect that school staff will:

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- Regularly monitor every pupil's attendance;
- Contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain the reasons why a child has been absent;
- Make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, express their concern and clarify the school's and the LEA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance;
- Use a range of strategies to encourage good attendance;
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and a safe and inclusive learning environment;
- Listen compassionately to any pupil's concerns as to why they are not attending school and work hard to address these concerns to improve attendance;
- Listen compassionately to any parent or carer's views and provide early help and advice;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Service;
- Ensure that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them.

Definition of good school attendance:

Good attendance is considered to be at least 96%. We categorise children who regularly miss school as **either persistently absent** (where attendance is below 90%) or **severely absent** (where attendance is below 50%).

It is important that parents and carers understand that illness, holidays, unauthorised absence all count towards their child's overall % attendance. If a child's attendance at the start of the year is low, this can be improved, as the % attendance will rise the more days they attend school. Ultimately school attendance dramatically impacts on the development of a child:



Leave of absence & 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 consider a prosecution 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 education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
- **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 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 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** 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 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.
- The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Inclusion Service 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.

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

Behaviour: Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

Encouraging Attendance

Shottermill Junior School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- By providing a caring and welcoming learning environment;
- By responding promptly to a child's or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils;
- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at school after the close of the register without a written explanation, the lateness will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and pupil's name recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill;
- By publishing and displaying attendance and punctuality information in newsletters and on the school website;
- By celebrating good and improved attendance;
- By monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the Education Inclusion Service if the irregular attendance continues.

Responding To Non-Attendance

The school gate opens at **8:35am** and closes at **8:55am**. Pupils should go straight to their class and be present for the register taken at **8:50am**. Pupils arriving after 9:00am will be marked late (L code) and must report to the School Office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for. Pupils who are late to school must

be signed in by their responsible adult at the School Office. Any pupils who arrive after the close of the register at 9:20am will be marked as an unauthorised absence (U code).

Parents/carers should contact the school explaining every absence a child has, on the first day of absence, as soon as possible and no later than 9:00am. Parents should contact the school on every day of absence, until the child returns to school. Parents can contact the school by email, phone or via an online absence form on our school website: <https://www.shottermill-jun.surrey.sch.uk/form/?pid=29&form=16>

When we receive no contact the following procedures may be followed:

- Members of the School Office will follow up with an email or phone call
- Alternative contacts provided by the parent / carer will be phoned / emailed
- We may contact another school where a sibling attends to ascertain the reason for the absence
- DSLs may make a home visit to check on the child
- DSLs will contact either the Police, Children's Services or the Inclusion Service where they believe a child's location is unclear and there is a safeguarding concern

If no message is received it is considered to be an "unauthorised absence" and the total of such absences have to be published by law. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child is repeatedly late or absent from school without authorisation, the parent could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice. Please contact the School Office or the Home School Link Worker: Katherine Bourne, if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Failure to attend school on a regular basis and on time will be considered a safeguarding issue

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform Shottermill school staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this 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;
- Confirmation from the new school that the child has started and been marked present.

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 Inclusion Service.

If a parent exercises their right to home educate their child, we will require this in writing, with the date they wish their child to be removed from roll, before this can be accepted by the Headteacher. It is our expectation that parents will meet with the Headteacher to discuss their decision to electively home educate their child. Pupils who are withdrawn from school will be referred to the Inclusion Service who will be in touch to arrange a home visit.

Non-starters

In the event of the child not starting at the school, the child must be marked as absent and enquiries made with Surrey Admissions Team. If Admissions confirm that the child has started at another school, the child can be taken off roll. However, if there is no record of the child starting anywhere else, school must refer to the Inclusion Service for a visit to be made and appropriate action can be taken to enforce attendance or establish what provision is being made available to the child.

School Organisation

In order for school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupil's at all times. Parents/carers need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education. In addition to this, the School has the following responsibilities:

Head Teacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- Review and adopt the whole school policy;
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that the appropriate resources are provided;
- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence;
- Ensure that key staff have timetabled periods for liaison and appropriate access to attendance management systems;
- Work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Service during their termly register analysis;
- Institute an attendance award scheme with assemblies, certificates and rewards;
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with staff responsible as well as the Inclusion Service;
- Offer support to parents, guardians and children in order to resolve issues of non-attendance;
- Ensure that any concern relating to the welfare of a child is quickly dealt with and the relevant agencies informed.
- Follow all safeguarding policies and protocols to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded.

Class Teachers

- Complete registers regularly and punctually at least twice daily;
- Follow up any unexplained non-attendance with those staff responsible for monitoring this;
- Record all reasons for absences in the register;
- Inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance of any concerns, or the DSL if appropriate;
- Be alert to early signs of emotional based school non-attendance (EBSNA) which could affect good attendance;
- Work proactively and in partnership with parents and guardians or other agencies to ensure that attendance is improved for identified individuals;
- Follow all safeguarding policies and protocols to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded.

Home School Link Worker

- Assist with enquiries to determine why a child has not attended school;
- Impress upon parents and guardians the importance of good attendance and offer early help and support to help them;
- Liaise between the Headteacher, Class Teacher and parent / guardian to ensure that there is effective communication;
- Ensure that any concern relating to the welfare of a child is quickly dealt with and the relevant agencies informed;
- Follow all safeguarding policies and protocols to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded.

Steps the school will take to follow up on school non-attendance:

1. Letter will be sent to the parent to alert them to an attendance concern or an informal discussion will be had
2. Parent will be invited to attend a meeting with the HSLW, DSL or Headteacher
3. Parent will be required to provide medical evidence to support further absences, so they can be authorised
4. Parent will be invited to come to an Attendance Panel meeting with the Headteacher and Inclusion Officer
5. Parent will be referred to the Inclusion Officer

The Attendance Register and marks used to record attendance and absence

/ \	Present (am) or (pm)
L	Late
O	Unauthorised absence
N	No reason yet received for absence
R	Religious Observance
G	Unauthorised holiday
H	Authorised Holiday
B	Educated off site (e.g. residential trip)
U	Late past the register close
C	Other authorised circumstance
I	Illness
M	Medical appointment
#	School closed for holiday or INSET day



SHOTTERMILL INFANT & JUNIOR SCHOOL

REQUEST FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE

As parents, you have the legal responsibility to ensure your child's regular attendance at school, and holidays (and where possible medical appointments) should be taken outside of school hours.

Please fill in this form if you would like to ask the Headteacher to authorise absence during school time.

You must ask in advance to request leave of absence from school. Under no circumstances will absences for family holidays in term time be authorised after they have happened. Unauthorised absence may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice to each parent, for each child absent.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully, taking into account the effect on the continuity of your child's learning, your child's overall attendance rate which includes sickness and medical appointments. The Headteacher can authorise up to 10 days of absence in exceptional circumstances, such as service personnel who cannot take family holidays outside of term time or a request for attending a close family member's funeral. **No parent / carer can demand leave of absence for their child as a right.**

The cost and availability of holidays is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance in the Surrey County Council guidance.

Name of child..... Class.....

I/We request authorisation for school absence (total number of school days)

From (first day of absence) To (last day of absence)

This absence cannot be taken outside of the school day because: (please specify exceptional reasons below)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signature of Parent/Guardian..... Date.....

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE(S) WHERE YOUR CHILD ATTENDS

For completion by the school:

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

HEADTEACHERS SIGNATURE Date.....

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Child's attendance during this academic year to date:	
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