



Policy Number CL-19

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

- ◆ **THIS DOCUMENT IS** a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for ensuring good levels of pupil attendance at The Chandler Junior School.
- ◆ **IT WAS DEVELOPED** through a process of consultation with staff, governors and the Inclusion Officer in line with the Surrey model policy
- ◆ **THIS POLICY is subject to review every two years.**

Purpose of the Policy

The staff of The Chandler Junior School are committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community well, and of which the community is proud.

It is proven that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure a child's attendance at school. During the academic year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days. We will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent 100% attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

Expectations

The school day begins at 8.45 with the register closing at 9.00 a.m. It is important that all pupils are on time at the start of the day. We expect that all pupils will:

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

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 send a note on their first day of return to school (unless the absence is of one day, when a telephone call will suffice).
- 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 twice daily;
- 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 notes authorising the absence;
- encourage good attendance;
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children;
- provide a safe learning environment;
- provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns;
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils/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;
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Service;

Leave of Absence

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.

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays. If a leave of absence in term is unavoidable, a Request for Leave of Absence form must be completed prior to the proposed dates. This can be obtained from the school office. The Headteacher/Governing Body will be responsible for deciding what they deem to be 'exceptional circumstances'. No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their child/children as a right.

All such absences, taken without prior authorisation by the School will be recorded as unauthorised. The Inclusion Service (IS) is responsible for the monitoring of attendance registers and in some circumstances parent/s may be liable to a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices

The IS, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer in persistent cases of unauthorised absence from school requiring the recipient to pay a fixed amount. The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid between 21 days and 28 days. If not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the absence by the Local Authority for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- To parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or Inclusion Officer.
- Where a child is taken out of School during term time for 5 consecutive days or more without the authority of the Headteacher. Each parent/carer is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child. 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.
- 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. You may be referred to the Inclusion Officer, who may issue a Penalty Notice. The lateness will be recorded in accordance with the 'Registration and Lateness' section of this policy.

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.

Encouraging Attendance

The Chandler C of E 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 late in the register by the office staff – it is therefore important that latecomers go straight to the school office and that teachers check they have done this.
- by publishing and displaying attendance statistics;
- by monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the IO if the irregular attendance continues.

Responding to Non-Attendance

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

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.30 a.m. the school will endeavour to contact them immediately. If the family are not on the telephone, a letter will be sent... In

certain cases, for example, where they may be a safeguarding concern, attempts to contact may be accelerated to the Home School Link Worker, senior staff or external agencies.

- 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, (third day if waiting for a response to a letter), 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 IS.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the IS may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.
- In the case of a child who was present for the morning registration not being present for the afternoon session, the office staff will have notified the teacher via the register. If this has not happened the class teacher should immediately notify the office staff of the child's absence.

Responding to lateness

When a pupil is late for school they should enter the building via the front office so that they can be recorded as being present. Registers open at 8.45 a.m. and are taken promptly. Children will be recorded as being late if they arrive after 8.45 a.m. but before 9.00 a.m., when the registers close. Any child arriving after 9.00 a.m. will be recorded as late after close of register (U coded) and this denotes an unauthorised absence.

Persistent lateness will be monitored and letters sent to parents to inform them of learning time lost. If lateness remains a problem and this lateness is after close of register a referral may be made to the IS.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform The Chandler C of E Junior 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.

The pupils' 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 IS.

Appendix 1

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Please note that the Education Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Name of Pupil/s:	Class/es:
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I request absence from school due to

From: (First day of absence)	To: (Last day of absence)
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Signature of Parent/Carer: Date:

Penalty Notices

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, may issue a Penalty Notice in cases of unauthorised absence from school (see Attendance Policy for further details). The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 per child per parent/carer if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid between 21 days and 28 days. If not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the absence by the Local Authority for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Signed by Headteacher:

Date slip sent home to parents:

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From: The Chandler C of E Junior School, Middlemarch, Roke Lane, Witley, Surrey GU8 5PB

To Parent/Carer of: (Child's Name) Class:

RECORD OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

This is to confirm that your request has been noted by the School for leave during term time.

This request will be marked as authorised unauthorised

From: (First day of absence)	To: (Last day of absence)	Leave taken to date this year:
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Signed by Headteacher: Date:

Revised 19.10.2020

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Staff Member responsible	HT	HT	HT	HT
Nature of changes made	Absences for holidays	Typo	Rewrite	Minor
Governor Committee	Personnel	Personnel	C&L	C&L
Date reviewed by Committee	13/05/2011	29/01/2015	31/01/20	09/02/2021
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