



# Shawfield Primary School

## Attendance Policy

Written: September 2019  
Reviewed: March 2022  
Next Review: March 2025

**SHAWFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

At Shawfield Primary School we firmly believe that all children benefit from regular school attendance. In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the children 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.

**Aims**

- To ensure that the children achieve maximum possible attendance.
- To identify any problems that prevent full attendance.
- To implement strategies to overcome attendance problems.

**The School will:**

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any children's concerns
- Meet, where possible, the requirements of the United Nations Convention - The Rights Of The Child, by ensuring that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them, through School Ambassadors
- Award certificate for 100% attendance annually

**Governors will:**

- Monitor attendance in the school

**The Headteacher will:**

- Emphasise to parents the importance of regular attendance by referring to it in newsletters and at parent meetings.
- Consult with Inclusion Service and make referrals.
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided;
- Work with the Pastoral Care Lead to discuss attendance concerns
- Make a decision regarding exceptional absence within 10 days of request being made.

**Teachers will:**

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all children, twice daily;
- Encourage good attendance
- Talk to parents regarding attendance at parent's evenings.
- Provide a welcoming and safe learning environment for children.

**Pastoral Care Lead will:**

- To work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Officer during their termly/half termly register analysis;
- Meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer to discuss any new concerns.
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with the Inclusion Service.
- Contact parents whose child's attendance is below 95%.
- Monitor children's attendance which is below 95%
- Contact parents of any other child whose absence/lateness is cause for concern.
- Produce attendance letters for children whose attendance is below 95% and 90% every half term.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Inclusion Officer.

**Office Staff will:**

- Contact parents by 10:00am on the first day when a child fails to attend where no message has been received to explain their absence;
- A telephone call from the School Office will be made by 10:00am
- Should we receive no response, a text message will be sent home when an absence is unexplained to seek reasons for absence a record of this message being sent will be added to the child/ren's CPOMS account.
- If no contact made by 2pm further telephone calls will be made to ascertain reasons for absence.
- Send a pro-forma letter home if a child has been marked late 3 times or more in a 3-week period. (appendix 2) This will be recorded onto CPOMS.
- Record all reasons for absences in the register.
- Will liaise with Pastoral Care Lead on matters concerning absence.
- Keep a record of the children for whom exceptional absence has been authorised.
- Inform the Headteacher and Pastoral Care Lead of irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance or unauthorised absence.
- Request evidence for medical/dental appointments.

**All parents/carers will:**

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
  - Ensure that their children arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
  - Ensure that they contact the school before 9.10 am on the first day of absence, if their child is unable to attend through illness, and every day thereafter for the duration of the absence
  - Contact the school promptly whenever any other problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.
- Endeavour to arrange medical/dental appointments outside school time. If appointments have to occur during school time provide the school office with appointment cards/letters at least 48hrs beforehand.
- Take family holidays in school holiday periods.

**All children will:**

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Speak to a member of staff if they have problems that stop them, from attending the school.

**Inclusion Service**

- The Inclusion Officers analyse the registers half termly and will advise the Pastoral Care Lead of any attendance concerns.
- The Inclusion Officer will communicate at least termly with the Headteacher and Pastoral Care Lead.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Inclusion Officer may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

**Guidelines:****Lateness and Non-Attendance**

Children should arrive in school between 8:40am and 8:50am. Registers will be taken at 8:50am. Children who arrive after 8.50am should enter the building via the main entrance and will be recorded as late (L code) if they arrive after the register has been taken but before the register closes. Any child who arrives after 9:10am will be recorded as late after close of register (U code) This absence will be unauthorised if a satisfactory explanation is not given.

### **Holidays/Absences**

Shawfield Primary School is committed to promoting the welfare of our children through regular school attendance. We know that every day lost to education can have a serious impact on a child's attainment and overall progress in school. We are therefore fully committed to promoting school attendance by promoting an environment and ethos where children feel safe and can build positive relationships with their peers. We expect that in return parents/carers ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually and that holidays/absences in term time are not taken. The school holiday dates are published a year in advance. Holidays should be booked for these times.

### **Exceptional Circumstances**

If you need to take your child out of school for a reason that is not medical or illness, you will need to get permission from the Headteacher and Governors. You need to give clear and adequate reasons why the absence cannot be taken during the school holidays and show that you have taken steps to minimise the amount of time taken out of school. Exceptional circumstances are likely to be one off, or once in a lifetime event. If your child is selected to represent a team at county or national sporting events this would be an exceptional circumstance.

Appendix V – Letter issued when leave of absence is not approved.

Appendix VI – letter issued when exceptional leave of absence is approved.

### **Penalty Notices**

The school follows government and Department of Education (DfE) guidance and policy in relation to penalty notices being issued.

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**

Children 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 Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher 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 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the headteacher, 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 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.

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.

### **Penalty Notice relating to Suspension and 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 suspended or excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each suspension. 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 suspension and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

### **Changing schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Shawfield Primary School's office staff as soon as possible. A child will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the date the child will be leaving this school and starting the next;
- the address of the new school;
- the new home address

The child'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.

### **Attendance Scheme.**

Appendix VII – A letter will be issued for attendance between 90% - 95%. The attendance of these children will be closely monitored by the Pastoral Care Lead.

Appendix VIII – A letter will be issued for attendance below 80%. The Pastoral Care Lead will meet with parents to discuss the issues impacting on the child's attendance. The Inclusion Officer may also be in attendance.

Appendix IX – A letter will be issued for attendance between 80% - 90%. The Pastoral Care Lead will meet with parents to discuss the issues impacting on the child's attendance. The Inclusion Officer may also be in attendance.

Appendix X – A letter for lateness will be issued to highlight the school's concerns. The Pastoral Care Lead may meet with parents/carers to discuss the issues impacting on the child's attendance. The Inclusion Officer may also be in attendance.

### **SEARCh Group Attendance**

The law allows for the dual registration of pupils at more than one school. Surrey policy for children attending nurture groups expects dual registration in cases where the children do not register at their own schools.

Children attending SEARCh are generally collected from their own schools and transported to SEARCh and so should be registered at their own schools prior to them undertaking the journey and so dual registration is not necessary.

SEARCh group is based at St Pauls Infant School, Tongham and so a register is taken and given to the St Paul's office for health and safety/fire reasons.

If there is a child who is taken directly to SEARCh group by parents/carers and not registered first at his/her own school the child will be dual registered at both Ash Grange Primary School and his/her own school. Both schools will share responsibility for the child and failure to attend either school at the proper time without good reason will be an unauthorised absence. The school where the child is expected to attend is responsible for accurately recording the child's attendance and chasing up non-attendance. The school where the child is not expected to attend will record the child as D.

If a family needs to request absence in term-time then an **Application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances** must be completed at least two weeks prior to the leave date. The Headteacher, who may consult with the Chair of Governors and other local schools (in cases where siblings attend a West Surrey Foundation school), 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.

### **Traveller Absence**

The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school 100% of the time.

To protect Traveller parents/carers from prosecution for failing to ensure regular attendance, the Education Act 1996, section 444, sub-section 6, states that a Traveller parent/carer is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days or 100 full days) in a year. A Traveller absence code can therefore be used if a Traveller child is absent when their parent/carer is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature that requires them to travel from place to place. When travelling a parent/carer has the right to enrol their child at another school in the area they are engaged in their trade. Schools will require evidence that Traveller parents are travelling for work.

**Appendix 1 – example text to be sent to parents regarding unexplained absence**



Shawfield Primary School  
Winchester Road  
Ash  
GU12 6SX

**Tel:** (01252) 320379

**Email:** [info@shawfield.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@shawfield.surrey.sch.uk)

**Website:** [www.shawfield.surrey.sch.uk](http://www.shawfield.surrey.sch.uk)

**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Corcoran

Dear..... Date .....

**CHILD'S NAME** ..... **CLASS**.....

..... did not attend school on .....

As a reminder we do need to be informed by 9.10am if your child is going to be absent. As you did not contact the school, please complete the section below with details of your child's absence and return to school as soon as possible. If we do not receive a reply ..... absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Thank you

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

Signed ..... Date .....

**Appendix 2**



**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Corcoran

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Dear.....

Date .....

**CHILD'S NAME** ..... **CLASS**.....

I am writing to advise you your son/daughter has been late 3 times or more in a 3 week period.

Please ensure your child is in school ready to start lessons at 8.50am. Registers close at 9:10am and lessons will have already started. Children who arrive late don't just miss out on the introduction of lessons themselves but interrupt the learning of others.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Corcoran  
Headteacher





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**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Corcoran

Date.....

Dear .....

**Attendance at Shawfield Primary School**

I am writing to inform you that your request for.....to be absent from school from.....until.....has not been approved.

All requests for leave of absence are treated sympathetically, but the policy of Surrey County Council, to which this school has agreed, is that other than in exceptional circumstances, holidays during term time will not be authorised.

If you take your child out of school without the approval of the school, you will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice (see enclosed leaflet) for failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance.

**Each parent will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who is absent.**

The Penalty Notice is for £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority must prosecute the recipient for failing to ensure regular school attendance under section 444 Education Act 1996.

I hope that you will re-consider your application.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Corcoran  
Headteacher



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Date.....

Dear .....

**Attendance at Shawfield Primary School**

I am writing to inform you that your request for.....to be absent from school from.....until.....has been approved.

All requests for leave of absence are treated sympathetically, but the policy of Surrey County Council, to which this school has agreed, is that other than in exceptional circumstances, holidays during term time will not be authorised.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Corcoran  
Headteacher

**Appendix VII – 90% - 95% attendance**



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**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Corcoran

\*DATE\*

Dear «Parental\_addressee»

RE: «Forename» «Surname»

We have reviewed attendance across the school, and it has come to our attention that «Forename»'s attendance is «M\_\_Present»%, which is a concern. Absence is recorded for children who are either not in school for a morning or afternoon session, including if they have been ill or for a medical appointment.

Your child's current low level of attendance could have a serious impact on their progress in school. We recognise that children have an occasional illness and this can impact on their attendance, and that if this is the first letter we are sending you it may be as a result of experiencing higher levels of illness than normal, but by highlighting our concern and the current attendance figures to you, we hope that you can work towards improving this figure to an acceptable level of at least 95%. We will continue monitoring «Forename»'s attendance and will review it again at the end of term. If there has been no improvement by then, we will write to you again, inviting you to a meeting to discuss how we can better support you and your child to have fewer absences from school.

If there are any circumstances that are causing your child to be absent from school that we are not aware of or you would like to discuss «Forename»'s attendance please contact Mrs Dixon our Pastoral Care Lead through the School Office.

Please sign the enclosed slip and return it to school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Corcoran  
Headteacher

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FAO: Pastoral Care Lead

I have received your letter dated \*DATE\* regarding the attendance of my child «Forename» «Surname».

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix VIII – Less than 80% attendance**



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**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Corcoran

\*DATE\*

Dear «Parental\_Salutation»

RE: «Forename» «Surname»

We have reviewed attendance across the school and it has come to our attention that «Forename»'s attendance at «M\_\_Present»% is unacceptably low. This level of attendance will have an extremely detrimental impact on «Forename»'s education. An attendance rate of 80% is the equivalent to missing one day of school per week which over five years would mean your child had missed a year of their education. Unfortunately our records show that «Forename»'s attendance is lower than this.

In view of this, you will shortly be contacted by Mrs Dixon, our Pastoral Care Lead to discuss «Forename»'s attendance so that we can work with you to improve this situation. If «Forename»'s attendance does not improve you will be required to attend a formal Attendance Panel. Panel members will include the Inclusion Officer, Headteacher and Pastoral Care Lead.

It is vital that the school office is informed of any absence by 9:10am on each day of illness. Due to «Forename»'s attendance level being so low we must request that you provide evidence of any illness, such as a medical appointment card, hospital letter, prescription or prescription medication packaging to the school office upon their return to school. We request that wherever possible, medical and dental appointments are made out of school hours. Should you be unable to gain an appointment out of school hours we fully expect your child to be returned to school immediately following their appointment.

Please sign the enclosed slip and return it to school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Corcoran  
Headteacher

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FAO: Pastoral Care Lead

I have received your letter dated \*DATE\* regarding the attendance of my child «Forename» «Surname».

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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«date\_of\_printing»

Dear «salutation»

**RE: «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname»**

We have reviewed attendance across the school and it has come to our attention that «chosen\_forename»'s attendance at «percentage\_attendance» is low. This level of attendance will have an extremely detrimental impact on «chosen\_forename»'s education. An attendance rate of 80% is the equivalent to missing one day of school per week which over five years would mean your child had missed a year of their education. Unfortunately our records show that «chosen\_forename»'s attendance is nearing this level.

In view of this, you will shortly be contacted by Mrs Dixon, our Pastoral Care Lead to discuss «Forename»'s attendance so that we can work with you to improve this situation. If «Forename»'s attendance does not improve you will be required to attend a formal Attendance Panel. Panel members will include the Inclusion Officer, Headteacher and Pastoral Care Lead.

It is vital that the school office is informed of any absence by 9:10am on each day of illness. Due to «chosen\_forename»'s attendance level being so low we must request that you provide evidence of any illness, such as a medical appointment card, hospital letter, prescription or prescription medication packaging to the school office upon their return to school. We request that wherever possible, medical and dental appointments are made out of school hours. Should you be unable to gain an appointment out of school hours we fully expect your child to be returned to school immediately following their appointment.

Please sign the enclosed slip and return it to school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Corcoran  
Headteacher

✂-----

FAO: Mrs Dixon

I have received your letter dated «date\_of\_printing» regarding the attendance of my child «chosen\_forename» «chosen\_surname».

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Headteacher:** Mr Stephen Corcoran

Date

Dear .....

We have reviewed punctuality across the school and it has come to our attention that ..... is a cause for concern.

For the period xxxxxx to xxxxxx ..... was late for a total of ..... minutes, which relates to ..... hours of schooling lost. Obviously there are times when unforeseen events arise and lateness results. However, it is important that you are made aware so that you can work with us in order to minimize the impact on .....education. May I take this opportunity to remind you that children are expected to arrive by 8.50am, when the register will be taken, and lessons start promptly.

If you wish to discuss ..... punctuality, please feel free to contact Mrs Dixon, our Pastoral Care Lead through the office.

We will continue to monitor ..... punctuality over the coming term. If there is no improvement we will request you make an appointment to come into school and speak to us about our concerns.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'S. Corcoran'.

Mr Stephen Corcoran  
Headteacher