



'Doing our best to achieve our best'

Clarendon Primary School and Nursery

Attendance Policy

Introduction

At Clarendon Primary School, we have an expectation that all children come to school or nursery on time every day as any time away from school will have an impact on their education. Children quickly learn that their attendance is important to their learning and that good attendance is essential for a successful future.

Research shows that children who regularly attend school tend to achieve higher standards than children with low attendance. As a school we want all our children to be happy and achieve, we want them to have a good level of education so they have more choices and opportunities in adult life.

How it adds up!

Attendance Percentage	Days missed over a school year	
100%	0 days	
95%	10 days	(2 weeks missed learning)
90%	20 days	(4 weeks missed learning)
85%	30 days	(6 weeks missed learning or ½ a term)
80%	40 days	(8 weeks missed learning or over ½ a term)

Our number one aim is to always work in partnership with parents / carers in order to support good attendance and punctuality, manage any problems or concerns that may arise at the earliest opportunity and implement our shared statutory responsibilities that are outlined by the DfE and central government.

As a school we convey the importance of regular attendance to parents and children through:

- Our school newsletter.
- Discussions with parents at parent consultation evenings, induction meetings and parent visits to the school prior to their child's admission.
- Weekly school assemblies, half-termly attendance raffles and termly attendance rewards.
- Regular daily contact with parents when entering school in the morning.
- Attendance monitoring letters and specifically arranged meetings to discuss reasons for lower than expected rates of attendance.

(This is in line with the DfE guidance as outlined in [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance](#))

School opening times:

The school is open for children in Reception to year 6 as follows:

- Registration begins at 8.40am, which is the time when all children need to be in their classrooms; however, the gate opens at 8.30am for children to come in early and go straight to their classroom. (This is known as a 'soft start' and helps children liaise with their class teacher before school officially starts and / or complete planned 'early work' activities.)
- School finishes at 3.10pm.

The school is open for children in the nursery as follows:

- For children who attend on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning – Nursery starts at 8.45am and finishes at 2.55pm on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday, Nursery starts at 8.45am and finishes at 11.45am.

- For children who attend on Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday – Nursery starts at 12pm on Wednesday and finishes at 3pm. On Thursday and Friday, Nursery starts at 8.45am and finishes at 2.55pm.
- For children who attend Full-time – Nursery starts at 8.45am and finishes at 2.55pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday Nursery starts at 8.45am and finishes at 3pm.

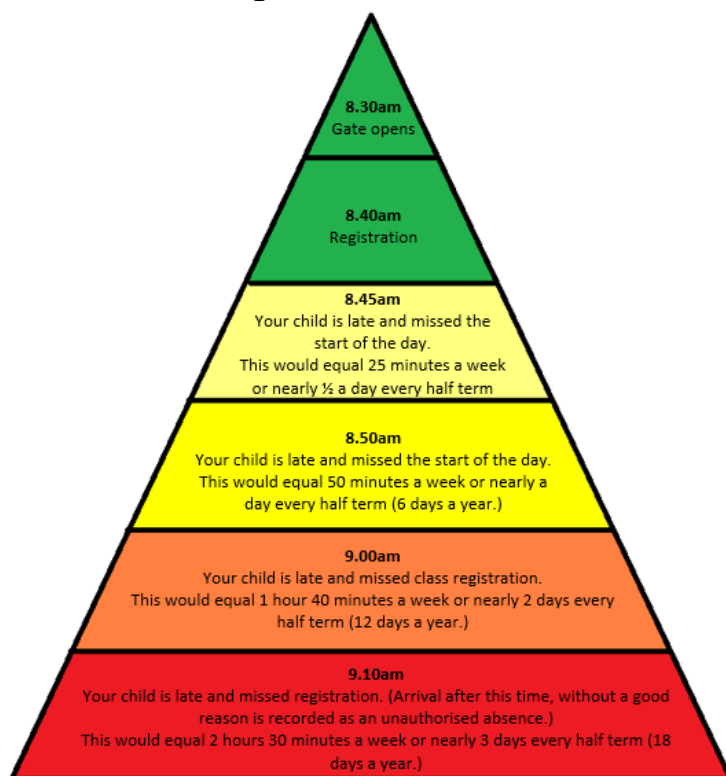
Lateness

The school opens at 8.30am, with the school day officially beginning at 8.40am. All pupils are expected to be in school and in their classrooms by 8.40am at the latest ready for registration. The registration period is from 8.40 to 8.55am. Any child arriving at school after 8.40am, but before 9.10am, will be recorded as 'late before close of registration'. Any child arriving after 9.10am will be marked as 'late after the close of registration', which is statistically an unauthorised absence for that session.

Furthermore, any child arriving later than 8.40am must be accompanied by a parent or carer to the school office to sign in; providing the reason for their lateness. This will then be recorded on the child's individual attendance record.

It is important to remember that pupils who are consistently late are not only disrupting their education, but also the education of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

Every minute of learning counts:



Persistent lateness can also:

- Cause embarrassment to the child
- Make it harder for the child to settle
- Cause disruption to the rest of the class

Completing the Register

As a school, staff understand the importance of correct marking of registers and know that incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable. Registers provide a daily record of attendance for each pupil and may be required by the Surrey Attendance Service or in a court of law as evidence, particularly where a fixed penalty notice has been issued. They also contribute to a pupil's end of year report.

Daily and weekly attendance figures are completed by the School Office and analysed by the School's Attendance Officer and Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis. Running totals of

authorised and unauthorised absence are maintained and reported to parents when they fall below a certain level or raise possible concerns. All registers at Clarendon are kept electronically.

All staff are aware that it is crucial that registers are kept up to date and accurate. This is particularly important for Health & Safety / Safeguarding reasons as, in the event of a fire or other emergency, staff need to be able to quickly account for all children who are present in the school.

Recognition and rewards for good attendance

Alongside the most important rewards that come with good attendance; (obtaining a good education, making good progress and being able to spend time with friends and classmates), the school also has a range of other strategies we use to recognise and reward good attendance. These include:

- Children being welcomed into school / class in the morning.
- Children's attendance contributing to their class' overall weekly attendance total, with a chance of being part of the winning class announced in Friday's assembly and recorded in the weekly newsletter.
- Children's attendance contributing to their class' overall weekly attendance total, with a chance of being part of the winning class at the end of a half-term. (**N.B** – At the end of each half-term the winning class receive the half-termly chocolates to enjoy with their classmates.)
- Having their name placed in the attendance raffle (once for each full week of attendance), with a chance of having their name drawn out in the last achiever's assembly each half-term to win a prize.

Types of absence

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised absence – where the school approves the absence.
- Unauthorised absence – where the school will not approve the absence.

Reporting an absence

If a child is absent from school, parents should email or phone the school office, before registration, or as early as practicable using our answer phone system. This should be on the first day of the absence and clearly state the reason for it. Parents should continue to contact the school on a daily basis until their child has returned.

If the school is not contacted then the School Office will endeavour to contact parents by telephone, text or email on the same day, as any unexplained absence cannot be legally authorised unless a valid reason has been provided.

If a child is on the Child Protection register, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL) will be informed and act as appropriate. Where a child is in the care of the Local Authority, daily contact will be made by the relevant authority to check whether the child is in school.

To identify whether your child is too unwell to attend school, please refer to the [NHS' 'is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#).

Unauthorised Absence during Term Time

As a school we know that a pupil's absence, during term time, can seriously disrupt their learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away from school, but are also less prepared for subsequent lessons that build on these sessions after their return. This can subsequently result in a risk of underachievement.

Clarendon Primary School adheres to the attendance policy guidelines outlined by the DfE and the Local Authority. This guidance clearly states that parents do not have the right to take their child out of school unless in exceptional circumstances.

In exceptional circumstances, planned periods of absence can be granted / authorised by the Headteacher; however, this must be requested in writing (via our online reporting system) with as much advanced notice as possible, (but at least 1 week) by a parent with whom the pupil resides. Each request will be considered on an individual basis, and written acknowledgement will be provided by the school. **(N.B – Going on holiday is not considered an exceptional circumstance and will therefore not be authorised.)**

The Local Authority policy states that where unauthorised absence exceeds 20 school days' and where reasonable endeavours to make contact with the family have been unsuccessful, the child's name can be removed from the school roll. Furthermore, if any period of absence has been authorised and the child does not return to school after this period, the child's name can be removed from roll after 10 school days. When a child's name is removed from our register, the local authority will be informed that the child is considered 'missing in education'. Once removed, the parents will also have to reapply to the Local Authority for a new school place.

If a child is taken out of school unauthorised, or authorised absence teachers will not be expected to provide work for these children.

Attendance and lateness monitoring:

To ensure good attendance is consistently maintained by all children, with absence and lateness identified as soon as a concern arises, the school implements a range of systems. These include:

- Classroom based staff informally monitoring absence and lateness; discussing this with parents as soon as a potential concern arises. This is to identify, manage and support any possible reasons that may be causing this as well as to ensure parents understand the impact ongoing absences and / or lateness will have on their child's education.
- Informal daily and weekly monitoring by the attendance officer on the gate in the morning. Again, this is to identify and support (as early as possible), the management of any concerns or worries that may be leading to this and ensuring parents understand the impact ongoing absences and / or lateness has on their child's education.
- Individual review of any child's attendance register, (where a concern arises), to identify possible reasons for this as well as appropriate action needed to manage, support and improve this.
- Formal half-termly monitoring by the attendance officer, with any concerns subsequently discussed and reviewed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, with actions and next steps identified to support this.
- The headteacher and school's attendance officer meet half-termly with the local authority's Inclusion Officer to discuss the attendance of children 'causing concern'.
- Each child's attendance and number of lates reported formally to each child's parent at the end of the year as part of their end of year school report.

Attendance and lateness management:

Whilst we fully understand there are sometimes valid and legitimate reasons why a child is late or absent from school (e.g. to attend a doctor's appointment or because they are too unwell to attend), as previously stated, ongoing lateness and absence can have a significant impact on a child's education and social integration.

To support consistently good attendance and punctuality, we know that it is crucial to work in close partnership with parents, particularly where a potential concern arises. To this end we have clear processes in place to both alert parents to changes in their child's attendance and, where necessary, to help them improve this. These processes include the following steps:

- Class teachers initially speaking with parents/carers, as soon as a decline in attendance or punctuality is noticed. This is to see if there are any possible reasons for this, which can be supported and managed.
- Sharing with parents, either by letter or text message, their child's current attendance, how this equates to the number of sessions missed as well as to inform them of the possible impact this could have on their child's education if it persists. **(N.B – Parents will also have an opportunity to come in and discuss this further if they wish, if they have concerns or questions, or if they would**

like further support.)

- Where attendance does not improve, informing parents that absence will only be authorised where it is supported by medical evidence.
- Where attendance continues not to improve, meeting with parents to share (in more detail), their child's absence rates, the impact this is having on their education and to agree actions to improve this. This will form an agreed plan between the parents and school.
- Where attendance still does not improve, the school will liaise with the local authority's Inclusion Officer to consider next steps, which could include issuing a fixed penalty notice and / or referring them to the inclusion service.

N.B – The school may also decide to liaise with the local Authority's Inclusion Officer at any stage identified above for advice and support.

Penalty Notices

The Surrey Attendance 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 require the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

1. Pupils identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
2. The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Head teachers 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 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.

3. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 10 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school 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.
4. 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. 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.

With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time (Paragraph 2 above) parents will be sent a 'Notice To Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Amount Payable Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

1. If a parent/carer has not incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the

notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

Parental advice for supporting good attendance

What can parents do to help?

- Parents must let the school know as soon as possible why their child is away.
- Parents should try to make appointments outside of the school day wherever possible. Where appointments during the school day are unavoidable, parents will be required to provide evidence of their time and date.

What can parents do if they are worried about their child's attendance?

- Talk to your child; it may be something simple.
- Talk to the class teacher or the staff at school.
- If concerns continue, make an appointment to meet with the Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher to discuss this further and formulate an agreed plan to help resolve your child's worries or concerns and subsequently improve their attendance.

Review:

Date reviewed by governing body: October 2024
Date due for review: October 2025