



West Byfleet Infant School
We Belong, Inspire, Succeed

Attendance Policy

Our school vision is '*We Belong, we are Inspired, we Succeed*'. This reminds us daily that children need to feel safe and secure within the school community, have opportunities to inspire their interests and an enthusiasm for learning, as well as achieving success at all levels.

We aim for all pupils within our school setting to achieve maximum attendance and school staff work closely with families to identify any barriers that may prevent this. We always act promptly and swiftly to ensure that these barriers are overcome with the best outcome for the pupil.

Member of staff responsible	Headteacher
Date Policy Produced	Spring 2023
Policy agreed/last reviewed	Autumn 2025
Next review date	Autumn 2026
Other Related Policies	Exclusions Policy
Is it a Statutory Policy?	Yes
Does it need Governor approval?	Yes

Policy Aims

The school staff, alongside the Local Authority, firmly believes that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. We endeavour to provide a school day which allows children to take risks, challenge thinking and ask questions about the world around them. We aim for all individuals to build the foundations of a lifelong learner and to always have high expectations of themselves.

Regular attendance is key to achieving the best outcomes for pupils (KCSIE 2025). Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will encourage parents to ensure that their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Every child has access to full time education in which they are entitled to
- Reducing absences, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

Legislations and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE) published with effect from 19th August 2024, and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- The Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

It also covers responsibilities referred to in:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Roles & Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the schools ethos, values, vision and across all policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfill expectations and statutory duties
- Monitor and regularly review and challenge attendance data
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing of the attendance policy at school

- Ensure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Monitoring school-level absence and reporting it to Governors
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented strategies

The Administration Team

The Administration Team is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analyzing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Working with Attendance Advice Officers at Surrey County Council to tackle persistent absence

Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis
- Raising any identified patterns or trends regarding absence to the Senior Leadership Team

Community Expectations

All pupils must:

- attend school regularly
- arrive at school ready to learn

All parents will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- ensure that they contact the school using the telephone absence line on the first day of absence (by 9:00am) and by 9:00am any subsequent days that they are unable to attend school. Please telephone 01932 343260 (select Option 1).

Please do not email the school with absence as we are unable to monitor it quickly enough and technical glitches may occur where information is not received

- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child

The school will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere
- provide a safe learning environment
- provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's or parent's concerns
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality
- monitor individual pupil's attendance and punctuality
- contact parents when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils
- make initial enquiries with parents regarding pupils who are not attending regularly
- meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance as set out in Surrey guidelines.

- Meet the requirements of the UN Convention – The Rights of the Child – by ensuring that whenever possible, students are consulted in all the decisions that relate to them.

Attendance Monitoring

Children must arrive in school from 8.45am on each school day. Children arriving after 8.55am will be marked as late in the register.

The morning register will be taken at 8.55am and the afternoon register at 1.15pm. It will mark using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Children's attendance at school is closely monitored. The following codes are used at school to record and monitor each child's attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law

Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Low attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data on a half-termly basis or earlier should any concerns arise.

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this data to provide targeted support to these pupils and families.
- Review the historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Attendance Letters

When a child's attendance falls below 95% the below process will be implemented

Stage 1 letter:- This letter explains the importance of attending school regularly and explains how attendance will be closely monitored in the future and how an improvement is expected.

Stage 2 letter:- This letter is sent when an improvement in attendance is not seen after a Stage 1 letter. This letter requests a meeting with the Headteacher (Senior Attendance Champion) where strategies to improve attendance will be discussed and an attendance action plan developed. Once a Stage 2 letter has been issued all absences without medical evidence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Notice to Improve letter:- This letter is sent if there is no improvement in attendance and there has been at least 10 unauthorised absences in the previous 10 school weeks. Attendance will then be monitored for a maximum of 25 school days at which point if there is still no improvement the school can request Surrey County Council to issue a penalty notice to the parent/carer.

Unplanned Absences

Parents / carers must notify the school of the reason for absence on the first day of any unplanned absence by 9:00am by ringing the school office and inform the school on proceeding days of continued absence – 01932 343260 (select Option 1).

Should no contact be made by 9:00am the school will implement 'First Day Calling Protocols'

First Day Calling Protocol

First day calling protocol is implemented on the first day of absence and any proceeding days of the episode as a result of the school not being informed of a child's absence from school.

1	Before 9am	Parents / carers to inform school for the reason of absence
2	9:00am – 10:30am	If no contact is made school will make every effort to obtain contact through working through the emergency contact list.
3	11:15am	If no contact has been made staff will move to a welfare check. This will be a home visit that will take place from 11:15am until midday.
4	12 noon onwards	If no contact has been made as a result of a welfare check the school will move to its safeguarding procedures and protocols. The absence would then be reported to Surrey Children's Services and the Police Welfare team.

Planned Absences – Authorised

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as a planned absence and as long as notification is given to the school in advance of the appointment this will be authorised.

Notification of appointments need to be shared with school through email or face-to-face at the school office. Evidence will need to be provided in relation to the medical appointments being attended.

We do encourage and ask that parents / carers try their hardest to make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible.

Planned Absences- Leave of Absence

For parents / carers wishing to take their child out of school for any other reason a leave of absence form will need to be completed and submitted (which can be found on the school website).

The school considers each application for term- time absence individually, considering specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

The Leave of Absence form must be submitted for consideration to the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. If leave is taken in term time without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and liable to a penalty notice.

If you take your child out of school without the approval of the school, you may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance.

Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence:

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 School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform West Byfleet Infants as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next school
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority.

End of Day – Late Collection

Our school day finishes at 3:15pm and collection of your child should be prompt to ensure staff can carry out roles and responsibilities after direct teaching time.

We do appreciate that on occasions there will be genuine reasons behind a late collection. However, repeated incidents will be subject to the following procedures:

- After 5 recorded late collections in a term, a letter will go home to parents to outline the dates where this occurrence happened and that we would like to see an improvement.
- After 8 recorded late collections in school term, a 'stage two' letter will be sent home. This will include an invitation for parents to come into school and discuss with the Head Teacher the reasons for persistent late collection.

Punctuality/Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial and registration at the beginning of the day with their teacher is important. Lateness into school causes disruption to a pupils learning time in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

- Registration takes place at 8:55am and pupils who arrive after the register has been taken will be recorded as late for school – coded 'L' on the registration certificate.
- After 5 recorded late marks in a term, a 'stage one' letter will go home to parents.
- After 8 recorded late marks in school term, a 'stage two' letter will be sent home. This will include an invitation for parents to come into school and discuss with the Head Teacher the reasons for persistent lateness.
- If lateness continues then the school will inform the Attendance Advice Officer who will work in collaboration with the family and school to improve the pupil's punctuality.
- Registers close at 9:25am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence – 'U' on the registration certificate (unless the reason for absence has been shared with the school)

Encouraging and promoting Attendance:

West Byfleet Infant School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at the school office after doors close, a late 'mark' will be recorded. If a child arrives late (after 9:25am) it will be recorded as late 'absence' and counted as an unauthorised absence, without a verbal or written explanation from the parent/ carer. Late pupils are recorded in the office Inventory system and all parents will be directed to sign their child into school. If you are phoning to inform the school that your child is going to be late,

someone is collecting your child or he/she has been absent, you may be asked to identify yourself with a unique password.

- By publishing attendance statistics and celebrating good attendance in weekly newsletters.
- By celebrating good and improved attendance through weekly class trophy presentation for the best attending class and a termly "Lucky Dip" for those with 100% attendance.
- By monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers, in writing, of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary.
- By providing Earlybirds sessions or Breakfast for identified families with the support of pastoral team and Assistant Head for Inclusion.
- By offering support, signposting and referrals to parents and ensuring leadership team are accessible daily on gate duty.
- By integrating 'good' habits for school day routines within PHSE curriculum.
- Class 'MAC' bear (Make Attendance Count) celebrated weekly for highest attending class.
- Late Gates conducted by leadership team to ensure personal face-to-face catch ups and identifying support early.

Appendix One: Attendance guidance for parents/carers

Good school attendance habits are best started early. Children learn from those around them and you as parents/carers set the standards and expectations for your child. Showing your child the importance of attending school every day not only helps your child to settle quickly when starting school but helps them to keep and maintain friendships and enjoy the school environment.

Be organised, have a plan, be consistent and involve your child.

You should:

- create good routines for mornings at home so that your child can arrive punctually and they are properly equipped; this will also mean your mornings can start calmly too
- make time to encourage and show interest. Chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch! Remember children can be tired when coming out of school, so a short chat over a snack or later that evening may produce a better result than a long list of questions
- read all school communications. A home/school diary can help with communication only when all parties use it as intended
- attend school parent meetings, events and functions
- check your child understands the home learning and that it has been completed. Support them in completing homework by creating a calm space for them to work in and set specific times during the week when home learning should be done
- avoid absence from school wherever possible – try to make doctors and dental appointments out of school hours. Absence means your child will miss out on the academic studies and will also learn that education is not the main priority within the family. This can have a lifelong effect

There tends to be good reasons why children become reluctant to attend school. Take the time to listen to your child, share any concerns you or your child may have with the appropriate member of school staff and seek support at the very earliest opportunity.