



C of E Primary School

Surrey Hills Primary School

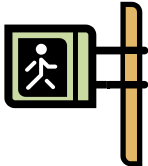
Attendance Policy Agreed – January 2011

This policy has been agreed by all the schools in the Dorking Confederation.

At Surrey Hills Primary School, it is our culture to support our families in all the ways we can. Working as a team, we aim to provide each child every opportunity to achieve their full potential. In order to do this it is essential that all pupils attend school regularly, and on time. To achieve our aims, it is, therefore, our duty to ensure that all parents and guardians understand the importance of regular attendance, the sort of absences we will and will not authorise and the procedures if your child needs to be absent from school.

It is proven that poor attendance is often linked to poor performance in the classroom. This can result in your child struggling with their relationships with their peers, developing low self confidence and experiencing a disrupted pattern to their education; all of which can be damaging in the long run.

We reward 100% attendance with a certificate given at the end of each term.

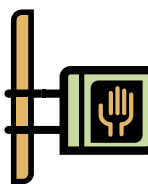


Authorised Absences

An authorised absence (one which the school agrees is a reasonable one) will only be granted for:-

1. Child illness.
2. Medical appointments.
3. External Examinations (eg. Music or dancing exams, entrance exams).
4. Educational assessments conducted by approved agencies.
5. Religious observances (eg. Funerals, major feast days in religions other than Christianity).
6. Education activity at an alternative site (eg. Participation in a county sports event).
7. Visits to prospective new schools.
8. Very special family circumstances.

Family holidays will only be authorised if your child's attendance meets the Government requirements of **95%**. However, we do understand that statistics do not always tell a full story and past attendance will also be taken into consideration before a final decision is made. The holiday must not exceed 10 school days except in exceptional circumstances, with the permission of the Governing Body. eg:- Visiting very close relatives who live a long way away. (ie:- Australia, India)



Unauthorised Absences

An unauthorised absence – absences which the school would not consider reasonable, include:-

1. A trip to the theatre.
2. Shopping for new shoes.
3. Your child staying at home because a parent is ill.
4. Having a hair cut.

All such absences need to be avoided in the interest of ensuring that your child develops a good habit of attending school regularly, allowing them to fulfil their potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Procedures

1. On the first day of and any further absence

If your child is ill or is absent for any reason, please phone or email the School Office for every day of absence, giving your reason for keeping them at home.

2. On your child's return to school

The school has to receive a letter or a signed absence slip(available from the Offices) from the parents or guardian for each absence if not previously reported by phone or email. If we do not have a reason within 2 weeks, the absence has to be recorded as unauthorised.

If you need to request a period of authorised absence

If you need to make a request to the Head Teacher for a period of authorised absence, you can pick up a form from the School Office. Please submit your request to the Head Teacher as early as possible, so that there is time for the request to be considered and for approval to be given if appropriate.

Absence will not be authorised during any period of public examinations or internal assessments – currently Year 2 May/June.

If your child is absent from school more than they should be:

At the end of each term the School Office will use its computer system to analyse absence across the school. As a result of this, some families will receive letters to inform them if their child's absence is lower than it should be if no prior discussion has taken place.

We send letters for the following reasons:-

1. **Attendance below 90% for the first time** - Letter sent to parents to say their child's attendance is causing some concern. An appointment with the Head will be offered to discuss ways that the school can offer support in finding a way improve this.
2. **Attendance falls below 90% over a second term**, with no identifiable reason – Letter sent with a specific appointment given to meet with Head Teacher and begin to address any issues which may be behind this pattern of poor attendance.
3. **If, following stages 1 and 2, there has been no significant improvement** – Panel Interview arranged with the Head Teacher and Educational Welfare Officer to plan together for improvements.
4. **In the unlikely event of there still being no improvement** – The School will inform you that they are not able to authorise any absences without seeing medical evidence that there has been the need for a Doctor's appointment or a prescription has been issued.

The Educational Welfare Officer has access to attendance figures and unauthorised absence data. If they are unhappy that attendance is not being improved in these extreme cases the Local Authority is likely to take action against families where persistent absence is a problem.

We are committed to supporting your child effectively, to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore have the best life chances. All challenges made concerning persistent absences, will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Lateness

Registration times are at **8.55am** at Abinger, **9.15am** at Westcott and **1.00pm** and **1.15pm** respectively. It is so important for all children to be on time, as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling, both for your child and for the rest of the class. The registration period will finish at **9.10 am/ 9.25am** and **1.05pm/ 1.20pm** respectively. If your child arrives in school after that time, they will be marked as absent, so persistent lateness will also affect your child's attendance figures.



RESPONSE SLIP

I have read and fully understand the Attendance Policy.

I will make every effort to ensure that my child attends regularly and understand the consequences of sustained and unexplained absence.

Signed _____

Date _____

Child's name _____