



# WALSH

MEMORIAL

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C.E. (Controlled)

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Infant School

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

DATE FOR REVIEW: SEPTEMBER 2021

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**For distribution to: All school staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the area education welfare officer**

All West Surrey Foundation schools, along with other local schools and Surrey County Council, firmly believe that all pupils benefit from 100% school attendance. Full attendance at school is crucial for a child's/student's future life chances and establishes a positive work ethic early in life. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. Pupils will be expected to achieve 100% attendance unless the absence is authorised by the headteacher or delegated person in school.

Parents/carers, whose children are of compulsory school age (5 to 16) and are registered at a school, are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school whenever it is open. If they do not do so they may be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996 and could be liable to prosecution or to be served with a penalty notice.

In line with the Education Regulations (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, all unexplained absences of 10 days or more are required to be reported to the Local Authority. In addition, schools are required to report all absence figures to the local authority and the Department for Education and to ensure they are recorded on a child's/student's annual report. Rates of absence are also taken into account by Ofsted as part of a school's inspection.

### **Expectations**

**We expect that all pupils will:**

- Attend school 100% of the time
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss with their class teacher, school office or headteacher any problems preventing them from attending school.

**We expect that all parents/carers and persons who have day to day responsibility for the children will:**

- Ensure 100% school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities. (By law all children aged 5-16 must have an appropriate full time education. You are responsible for making sure this happens by registering your child at

the school and ensuring they attend. Further information regarding your legal responsibilities can be found on the Surrey County Council website)

- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day and have completed any homework they have been given
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school
- Contact the school office by 9.30 am on the first day of a child absence, giving the reason for the absence.
- Discuss with the class/form teacher, house head or headteacher any problems preventing their child/children from attending school.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details.

**We expect that school staff will: -**

- Keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, as required by current legislation
- Monitor every pupil's attendance
- Contact parents/carers as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Encourage good attendance
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere and a safe learning environment for children
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns
- Make initial enquiries to parents/carers of pupils who are attending irregularly, expressing the school's concerns and clarifying the school and the local authority's expectations regarding regular school attendance
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the attached Educational Welfare Officer
- Fulfil, where possible, the requirements of the UN Convention – The Rights of the Child, by ensuring that children are consulted in all decisions that relate to them

In order for this Attendance Policy to be successful, **every** member of staff in every school must make attendance a high priority and convey this to pupils at all times. Parents/carers should also need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

**Illness**

If a child is unfit for school parents should contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.30am either in person or by telephone. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Illness due to Covid-19 is recorded separately.

## **PUPIL'S LEAVING DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school; wherever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time; When appointments during school hours are unavoidable, the school should be notified of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Children should be taken out of school for the minimum amount of time. Evidence of the appointment may be requested.
- Parents are requested to advise the school, by completing the Absence Request Form, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving and the expected return time;
- Pupils must come to the office to be signed out on leaving the school and to be signed back in on their return;
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are requested to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site;
- All pupils leaving with permission will be given a written authorisation slip by the school in case of being stopped by Truancy Patrol;
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the police and register the pupil as a missing person.

## **PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS**

During the Covid-19 pandemic from September 2020 pupils have a staggered start but we hope all pupils will be in school by 9.20am when the lateness will be recorded as an authorised absence and a missed session and can be subject to penalty notices and prosecution by the local authority.

Punctuality to school is crucial and for registration at the beginning of the day. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. The school grounds are open at 8.40am and the door open at 8.45.

- Registration takes place at 9.00am. Students who arrive after this time will be recorded as late to school and receive a late mark in the register;
- Registers close at 9.15am and after this time lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and a missed session and can be subject to penalty notices and prosecution by the local authority;
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be referred to the home school link worker and/or referred to Education Welfare and can be subject to penalty notices.
- Late arrival after the close of registration on 10 occasions during a half term where the pupil's attendance falls below 90% will be referred to Education Welfare and can be subject to penalty notices.

We appreciate that sometimes unavoidable circumstances can happen and that this would mean a child being late into school. If there are exceptional circumstances which mean your child is going to be frequently late then this should be discussed with the Headteacher. The school will monitor children's lateness and this will be looked at on an individual basis.

## **CHANGING SCHOOLS**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Walsh Memorial CE Infant School 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
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The student'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 Tracking Officer and Education Welfare.

**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 Ash Grange School and so a register is taken and given to the Ash Grange 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 unauthorised absence. The school where the child is expected to attend is responsible for accurately recording the pupil's attendance and chasing up non-attendance. The school where the pupil is not expected to attend will record the child as D.

## **Requests for leave of absence during term time**

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence during term-time for their child as a right and authorisation cannot be given retrospectively. Permission for absence

during term time is at the headteachers discretion and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. **The Application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances** form is available from the school office.

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.

**Family holidays** - The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and are available from the school office and on the individual school websites. Family holidays need to be booked within the school holiday dates. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 remove references to extended leave and holiday and make it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Family holidays are not exceptional circumstances and so are deemed as “unauthorised leave of absence” and will trigger a penalty notice.

**Family weddings or significant events** – The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 require headteachers to determine the number of school days that a child can be away from school if leave is granted and this would be for a *maximum* of 3 days.

### **Traveller Absence**

The aim for the attendance of Traveller pupils, in common with all other pupils, 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 pupil 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.

### **Penalty Notices**

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council, will 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 per parent per child, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 per parent per child, 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.

If prosecuted you could receive a community order, a fine of up to £2,500 per parents/carer or a custodial sentence.

### **School Attendance order**

A parent who fails to ensure that their child receives an education other than at school and fails to register their child at a school will be served with an Attendance Order requiring them to register the child at a named school.

Failure to comply with an Attendance Order is an offence under Section 443 Education Act 1996.

### **Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued**

1) Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

**The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which becomes law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if absence is granted.**

2) Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** may be 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) A Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 85% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parent's failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or the Educational Welfare Service 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 taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.** Parents will be reminded of this policy on a termly basis.

### **Walsh Memorial CE Infant School Times of Day**

8.45 -9.05 am	School door opens
9.00 am	Registration and doors shut
9.01 am	Registers returned to office, arrival between 9.00-9.15 recorded as L for Late
9.05 am	Lessons
9.15 am	Registers closed arrival after this time recorded as U for registers closed/unauthorised absence
10.30 am	Collective Worship
10.45 am	Playtime
11.00 am	Lessons
12.00 pm	Lunch time
1.00 pm	Children return to classroom
1.05 pm	Lessons
2.50 -3.00 pm	Home time

### **Reporting Attendance**

A certificate of attendance will be sent out with the school reports each term which will show the percentage attendance for each child as well as their actual marks for each day. This will give parents/carers an overall picture of the child's attendance throughout the school year.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All children's attendance and punctuality is monitored and procedures are followed regardless of race, culture, gender, ability or religion. **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The school has an established culture that promotes and enhances the positive mental health of the whole school community, recognising that healthy relationships underpin positive mental health and have a significant impact on learning, health and wellbeing. We champion the expectation that 'mental health is the individual's responsibility supported by the whole school community.'

**Committee: Resources**



**Mrs S Author:**

**Cawson  
September Date**

**approved:  
2020**

**September Date**

**for Review: 2021**

# **WALSH MEMORIAL COFE INFANT SCHOOL**

## **Attendance Policy - Covid-19 Addendum November 2020**

**(Applicable to Whole School)**

**Last updated: November 2020**

**PARENTS/CARERS - PLEASE ENSURE THE SCHOOL HAS UP TO DATE HOME/WORK AND MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBERS. (Aside from safety reasons, if your child is taken ill in school with COVID-19 symptoms, they will need to be collected quickly from school.)**

1) **Does my child have to attend school as of September 2020?**

All children, in all year groups, are expected to attend school from September.

2) **Travel to school**

Children (so far as is practical) need to maintain social distancing on arrival to school. Public transport should be used only if necessary and masks should be worn in accordance with government guidelines. They should avoid walking in large groups. Walking with siblings and or walking with one or two others in their class groups (whilst socially distancing) is advisable to keep their bubbles as small as possible. The school advises that families follow the current government guidelines on social gathering and contact, and maintain these in the context of bringing and collecting children from school, especially around the school gates and perimeter.

3) **Punctuality to school**

Normal punctuality rules will apply from September 2020.

4) **Arrival and Departure**

<b>Start Time</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Finish Time</b>
8.45 a.m.	Silver Class	2.50 p.m.
8.55 a.m.	Gold Class	3.00 p.m.
9.05 a.m.	Ruby Class	3.05 p.m.
8.50 a.m.	Diamond Class	2.50pm
8.45 a.m.	Emerald Class	2.50 p.m.
9.00 a.m.	Sapphire Class	3.00 p.m.

Children need to enter sensibly and calmly, adjusting their pace and keeping their distance.

5) **Where does my child go if they are late in the morning?**

Parents and carers are asked to ensure that children are on time as lateness reduces learning time and disrupts the learning already happening in a lesson. Any further lost learning time going forward will compound the time that has already been missed.

However, if a child is unavoidably late, they must go to the office and let a member of staff know they are late and give their name, class and reason.

## 6) My child is ill what do I do?

Ring the school by 9am and leave a specific message explaining why with details of their symptoms / illness.

### 6A POSSIBLE COVID-19 ILLNESS

**If your child has ANY COVID-19 symptom, he/she MUST NOT come into school.**

This means:

- a fever,
- a new or continuous cough
- loss or change to their sense of taste or smell

**A COVID-19 test must be booked.**

**SIBLINGS in the same household MUST NOT come to school.**

**When a parent/carer calls the school to report a COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19, they must give the names of all the children in the household as they will all need to self-isolate.**

Tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus website](#), or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Most tests are returned within 24 hrs when a booking is made. This route is advisable to reduce lost learning days. **When a test is booked, the school must be informed and we must be updated as to whether the test is negative or positive. The result should be forwarded to us by email to [admin@sayescourt.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:admin@sayescourt.surrey.sch.uk). Children cannot return to school without prior communication as to the test result.**

If a child tests **negative**, they can stop self-isolating and return to school if they are well enough to do so. Other members of their household can also stop self-isolating.

If a child tests **positive**, they should follow the '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)' and must continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and return to school **only** if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. (This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone.) **The 10 day period starts from the day when they first became ill or the date of the test if they are asymptomatic. (If symptoms begin after the test, this becomes day 1 and the 10 days starts from the onset of symptoms). Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.**

**Cases of Coronavirus known to the school will be treated confidentially.**

## **6B NON COVID-19 ILLNESS**

For a non COVID-19 illness, normal rules and procedures would apply. Unless children are too ill to be in school, they should be in school. The number and lengths of illnesses are monitored and if a child's absence falls below expected levels, it would be followed up with our normal procedures.

**However, please note, if a suspected non-COVID illness presents with ANY COVID symptom: i.e: fever/continuous cough/loss of taste and smell, self isolation must begin and the school must be informed. (Two examples are given below to illustrate this point). A test must be taken and the result shared with the school before the child can return. This must be treated as COVID-19 illness until a negative test has been returned. After a negative test, children should only return if they are well.**

### **Examples:**

If your child has vomiting and a temperature, a COVID-19 test MUST be taken and COVID-19 policy above followed until COVID-19 is ruled out. (Reason - a temperature is a COVID-19 symptom.)

If you think your child has flu, a COVID test MUST be taken and COVID-19 policy above followed until COVID-19 ruled out. (Reason - COVID-19 causes flu like symptoms)

### **7) One of my children has a COVID symptom, can his/her sibling come to school?**

No. Siblings must not come into school if their brother/sister shows symptoms and or has a positive test. **The sibling(s) must self isolate for a minimum of 14 days** only returning at the end of day 14 if any fevers have gone completely. If the test is negative for the child where symptoms originated (and the child is well), all may return to school and the period of self isolation will end. Please ring the school in the case to notify us before your child/children return(s).

### **8) A member of the household is ill with COVID-19 symptoms, but my child has no symptoms, can they come in?**

If a member of the household displays symptoms, any children would need to self isolate for 14 days, unless a negative test is received for the person displaying symptoms. If the child displays no symptoms during this time, he/she would return to school from day 15 (assuming all temperatures have gone completely).

### **9) My child has a cough, can they come in?**

This will depend on the probable cause. For example, for a hayfever related cough, children should bring their antihistamines to school, and leave them with their teacher. If the cough was a new continuous cough (ie a COVID-19 symptom) the child and household should be at home self isolating until a COVID test has determined the next steps. (See item 6 above)

### **10) NHS test and trace have contacted us**

If your household is told by NHS test and trace to self isolate, the self isolation guidance must be followed by the household (this will be for 14 days). Please ring the school and notify us immediately. Any children in school when the call is received would need to be sent home straight away.

**If you are told to self isolate, children MUST NOT come to school until 14 days have passed.**

### **11) My child or a member of the household had the shielding letter from the government. What should I do?**

Shielding restrictions have been lifted as of the 1st August 2020. This means all children are expected to be in school. If a child did not return to school we will follow this up using our normal procedures.

Most children who were on the shielding list, would not be expected to remain on the shielding list in the case of a further lockdown this winter. These decisions are now being made locally by consultants in conjunction with families. If your child is advised to shield at any point, please share this information with us so that we can support your child's education remotely. Please give us copies of any documentation that you receive.

## **12) Will I be fined if I do not send my child to school?**

We would prefer this not to happen especially in the current situation, but parents and schools have a legal duty to ensure all children are in school. We will work with families using our normal procedures but if children are persistently absent without appropriate supporting evidence, referral to the Inclusion Officer is possible.

**Absences relating to coronavirus do not count as a negative attendance and therefore does not reduce a child's attendance percentage.** Repeated general illness (not Coronavirus related) does bring down a child's attendance percentage and would be followed up as per our normal procedures.

## **13) I have heard there is a positive case of a child at the school. What happens now?**

In the case of a positive test result known to the school, the school will report this to the Local Public Health Protection team. The Local Public Health Protection team may also contact the school if a positive case comes through NHS Test and Trace. The school will take actions as decided by PHE. PHE will advise which children or adults have been in close proximity to an affected person and who should be sent home. We will contact directly the families of affected children should this occur.

## **14) I have heard there is a positive case of a child at the school. My child was not close to this child but I am afraid to send my child to school in case they catch the virus.**

Children are taught either in class group or year group bubbles. If a bubble is sent home, these absences would be authorised. If children are absent (due to fears relating to COVID) but are not part of the bubble that has been sent home, this would be considered an unauthorised absence and normal absence procedures and follow up with regards non attendance to school would apply.

The school is taking considerable measures to keep staff and pupils safe. As well as robust absence reporting procedures to keep COVID-19 off site, the school has implemented:

- Bubbles which enable to a broad and balanced curriculum to be taught to all students. - Reduced student movement between lessons using a fixed classroom base as far as is possible with regards deliver of the curriculum
- Reduced the number of classrooms that children will access and increased the number of double lessons to further reduce movement
- Considerable infection control measures for handwashing/hand sanitising - The use of the catch it, kill it, bin it approach re sneezing/coughing.
- Specific year group entrance/exit gates.

More detailed and extensive information on how the school is being made safe for all is available in our risk assessment which can be found in the Covid section of our website.

**15) My child came home ill with suspected Coronavirus. How long do they stay off for?**

Unless there is a negative test, your child should be at home for 10 days. The rest of the household would then begin a 14 day self isolation. (See notes 6 above for more information and procedures with regards positive and negative tests.)

**Please note, if we are sending a child home with suspected Coronavirus, they must be collected by a parent or carer.**

**16) My child's bubble has been sent home. What happens now?**

A 14 day self isolation period begins for all children in the bubble (the rest of each household does not need to self isolate unless someone in the household shows symptoms, in which case the household must self isolate).

Households should follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'. They should get a test, and:

If the test delivers a **negative** result, **they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14day isolation period**. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days.

If the test result is **positive**, they should inform the school immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'

**17) I have booked a holiday abroad and now we have to quarantine. Can I end the quarantine early in the case of a negative test?**

No. You must follow the quarantine periods as laid out by the government and self isolate for 14 days. This is because an infection may develop during this time. If you are returning from a country on the quarantine list (please note that the guidance is changing at very short notice), it must be respected.

As per our normal policy, holidays are not permitted in term time. For this year, we would advise not taking your children abroad at any point during the holidays if a 14 day quarantine on your return, would impact on term time education.

Thank you for reading this document and please keep it handy for reference.

Government guidance is expected to evolve through the Winter 2020. The latest version of this document will be on the school's website and we will notify you if there are any changes.