

Queen Eleanor's Church of England Junior School
An Academy in the Good Shepherd Trust
Queen Eleanor's Road, Onslow Village, Guildford, GU2 7SD



Diocese of Guildford

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Responsible Body
September 2015	September 2017	Headteacher	Children's Committee

Aims

Queen Eleanor's C of E Junior School, along with other local schools and Surrey County Council, firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. Full and regular attendance at school is crucial for a child'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 but when absence is unavoidable, parents/carers will be required to inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

This policy sets out the school's procedures relating to pupil attendance.

Key Objectives

We expect that all pupils will:

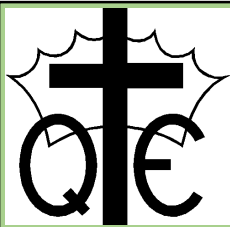
- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the school day

We expect that all parents/carers will:

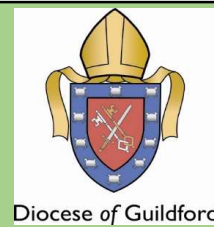
- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure that the child in their care arrives at school punctually, prepared for the school day;
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence and send a note on their return to school. **Please note after an absence of 3 days, the school may ask for a medical certificate from a doctor to verify a child's absence.**
- discuss promptly with their child's class teacher or senior staff, any problems that deter their child from attending school;
- avoid taking holidays in term time.

We expect that the school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily;
- monitor every child's attendance using Arbor;
- contact parents as soon as possible when unexplained and/or prolonged absence occurs and obtain notes authorising the absence.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality;
- provide a welcoming and safe learning environment for children;
- meet with the school's Education Welfare Officer regularly to discuss any new concerns and report on the progress of existing cases;
- meet with the parents of children whose attendance causes concern;
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service.



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Parental responsibility and the law

Parents/carers, whose children are of compulsory school age and are registered at a school, are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. 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.

Registers

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

A termly check is made of the school registers and parents are informed of their child's attendance for that term. The school uses a colour coded letter system in order for parents to understand their child's attendance. If they receive a letter printed on green paper, it signifies their child's attendance is 95% or greater. If they receive an amber coloured letter, it shows their child's attendance is between 90-95%. If the letter is red, it signifies that their child's attendance is below 90%

This procedure is in line with guidance given by the Educational Welfare Officer. A copy of the letters are included in Appendix 2.

Registration and Lateness

It is expected that children will arrive at school on time. The school day begins at 9.00 am.

If pupils arrive at school after 9.00am a late mark will be recorded and if a child arrives after 9.20am without a valid explanation it will be recorded 'as late after close of register' and counted as an unauthorised absence for that session. The pupil's name will be recorded in the late book in case of a fire drill.

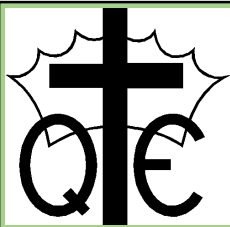
In cases of persistent late arrival to school, school will inform the parents and discuss the issues relating to the persistent lateness.

Responding to Non-Attendance

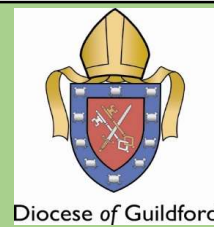
Initial actions

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school by 9.00am if a child will be absent for any reason. When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following

- If no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.00am, the school will endeavour to contact them that day by phone or e mail.
- **If there is no response the school will try to contact the parent/carer on every subsequent day of absence.**
- **If, by the third day there has still been no contact made, the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers and invite them into school to discuss their concerns and the reasons for the absence.**



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- if there is persistent non-attendance, the school's Home School Link Worker or Headteacher will keep records of the contact with home during the period of absence and this will be discussed with the EWO when a formal referral may be made
- 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. If a child has persistent absence or has been identified on truancy patrols and meets the criteria for a Penalty Notice to be issued; or has been taken out of school without the school's permission for 5 or more days; the school will liaise with the EWO / LA to decide whether a Penalty Notice should be issued;
- failure to comply with the expectations set by the EWS may result in further action, an application for an Educational Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

Frequent absence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s by:

- *Phone call to parent by the class teacher and issues discussed with pupil within school.*
- *Letter sent to parents stating concerns.*
- *Meeting at school with Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team.*

Education Welfare meets with the Headteacher on a regular basis to discuss attendance concerns. If schools are unsuccessful in resolving the issues the school will refer to Education Welfare.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Any absence has an impact on a child's educational achievement and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

The DfE and the Local Authority monitor the levels of PA children and levels of absence in all schools.

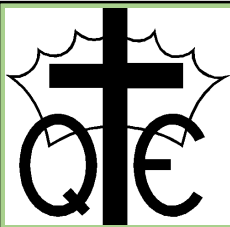
Attendance of all pupils is tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring because absence affects attainment.

Parents will be informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance.

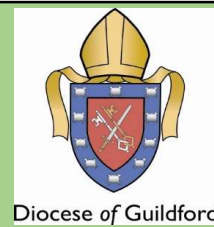
Request for leave of absence

The decision to grant a leave of absence is delegated to the Headteacher by the Governing Body. The Headteacher will use his discretion when authorising requests for a leave of absence and will only grant permission where there is an exceptional reason for the child not to be in school.

All absences for will be considered to be unauthorised leave of absence unless permission is granted by the Headteacher in advance. All other requests for leave will be considered on a case by case basis by the Headteacher who has been delegated to do so by the Governing body. Again, the decision of the Governing Body will be final.



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If a family needs to request absence in term-time then an Application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances Form (see Appendix 1) must, wherever possible, be completed prior to the leave date and preferably at least two weeks before. This form can be obtained from the school website, the school office or by writing to the Headteacher.

An authorisation for a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances will not be granted to any child whose attendance is below 90%.

Family holidays

The school holiday dates are published at least year in advance by Surrey County Council and are available from the school office, the school's website and Surrey County Council's website (www.surreycc.gov.uk). Family holidays need to be booked within the school holiday dates.

Family holidays are not deemed exceptional circumstances.

Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term time without the authority of the Headteacher a letter will be sent to the parents and kept on the child's pupil file at school. A penalty notice may also be issued for the absence.

Changing School

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform school staff 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 this school and starting the next;
- the address of the new school;
- the new home address (if appropriate and known).

The pupils' 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 Education Welfare Service.

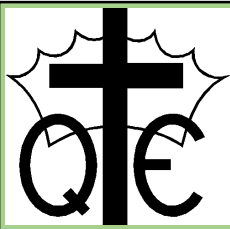
Dental and medical treatments

Whilst the school will grant requests for absence for dental and medical treatments, parents/carers are encouraged, whenever possible, to book medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. When appointments during school hours are unavoidable, the school office should be notified in advance in writing, of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Evidence of the appointment may be requested.

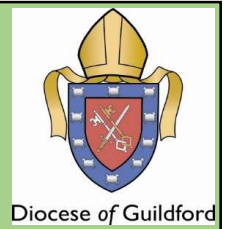
Education Welfare Officer

Education Welfare monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.

If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school then the school will make a referral to Education Welfare. The EWO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the EWO can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution.



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Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

Penalty Notices

The Education Welfare 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

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

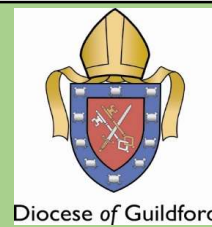
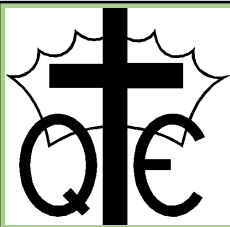
The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which becomes law on 1st September 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days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

Where a child is taken out of school for 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 85% 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.

Headteacher:		Date:	September 2016
Chair of Governors:		Date:	September 2016
Policy Number:			



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Appendix 1

Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances Application Form

Please complete the form giving as much detail as possible

If you are requesting a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances for more than one child you will need to complete a separate form for each child.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013 which became law on 1st September 2013 state that Head Teachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. Holidays should be taken during the school holiday period and not during term time. During the academic year pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

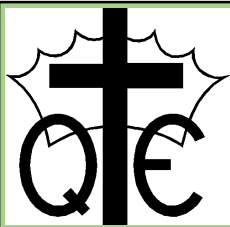
Please fill in this form if you want to ask the Headteacher of your child's school to authorise a leave of absence during term time. Under no circumstances will absences for family holidays in term time be authorised after they have happened. Unauthorised absence may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice to each parent, for each child absent.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully but can only authorise the leave if s/he considers the reasons for the request to be exceptional. The Headteacher will notify you of the decision within five days.

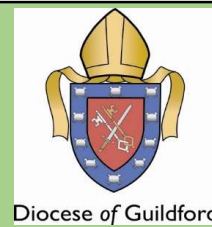
Name of child:		Class:
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for		
from:		to:
Number of school days:		
Reason for request:		
Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year? YES / NO		
If YES, please give dates and details:		
I also have children at...		
Signed:	(Parent/Carer)	Date:

THIS PART OF THE FORM TO BE KEPT IN THE CLASS REGISTER UNTIL THE DATES HAVE PASSED

Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances Application Form		
<i>(To be completed by the Headteacher)</i>		
Name of child:		Class:
Child's attendance level last academic year:		%
Our overall school target for attendance this year is:		%
Having considered your request carefully, I do/do not consider this to be exceptional circumstances and will/will not be authorising this absence.		
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
Explanatory notes:		
Signed:	(Headteacher)	Date:



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Appendix 2

Date

To the Parent/Carer of <<name>>
 Class <<class>>

Attendance letter

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have listened to the feedback we have had on our termly attendance letters and have reworded them in order to give you more clarity on why we are sending the letters and to give you greater understanding of the processes we follow as a school.

The attendance figures below are for the whole year so far. The Red, Amber or Green grading is based on your child's attendance and the box below shows their percentage for each category.

We do realise that many children fall ill from time to time and if your child has been ill for a period of time this will affect their overall attendance. We do recognise this may be the case for many pupils but we also monitor all pupil absence closely to ensure all children are given the best possible opportunities to attend school.

As a school we have a responsibility to ensure we do all we can to support families where their child's attendance has caused a concern. We work closely with families in these situations, mostly through Rocio Barnes our Home School Link Worker and with Cara Harding who is our attached Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

Category	Percentage*
Total sessions this year so far	376
Total Attendance	
Authorised Absence	
Unauthorised absence	
Red, Amber, Green	

* Please note the figure above are for sessions. Each school day counts as two sessions (am and pm) as the registers are taken twice.

If your child's attendance is between 95% and 100% they will receive a Green coding. If their attendance is between 90% and 95% they will receive an Amber coding. If their attendance is below 95% they will receive a Red coding. Please see the attached leaflet for a more detailed description of these colour codings.

If you have any queries or concerns about the percentages above, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks

Roger Blackburn
 Headteacher
 Queen Eleanor's CofE (Aided) Junior School
 An Academy in the Good Shepherd Trust