

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



Date	Review Date	Coordinator
14/09/2022	September 2024	Headteacher and Attendance Lead

1. Aims

It is our role as staff at Queen Eleanor's C of E Junior School to promote and support our children's learning and enable each one of them to achieve their full potential. We endeavour to provide a school day that excites, challenges and motivates each child and allows them to develop as independent learners. We encourage the children to achieve personal excellence in all aspects of work and behaviour.

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. We know that every day lost to education can have a serious impact on children's attainment and overall progress in school. Full and regular attendance at school is crucial for a child's future life chances and establishes a positive work ethic early in life.

As a staff we 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.

2. Key Objectives

We expect that all pupils will:

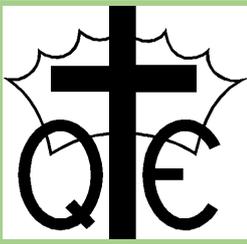
- attend school regularly;
- attend school punctually;
- attend school appropriately prepared for the school day

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.
- discuss promptly with their child's class teacher or senior staff, any problems that deter their child from attending school;
- avoid taking leave of absence in term time.
- provide medical evidence when their child's absence is of a medical nature

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;



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Attendance Policy



- meet with the school's Inclusion 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 Inclusion Service.

3. 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.

4. 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**.

5. Registration and Lateness

It is expected that children will arrive at school on time. The school gates are opened at 8.30am and the register is taken at 8.45am.

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.

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

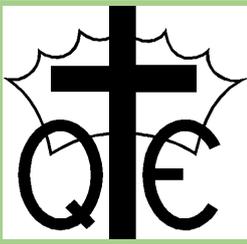
6. Responding to Non-Attendance

a. 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.**



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Attendance Policy



- **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.**
- 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.

b. 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 school are unsuccessful in resolving the issues the school will refer to Education Welfare.

c. 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.

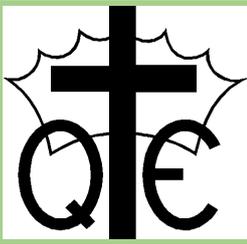
Attendance of all pupils is tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring because absence affects attainment.

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

d. Request for leave of absence

The decision to grant a leave of absence is delegated to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will use her 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 requests for leave of absence will be considered to be unauthorised unless permission is granted by the Headteacher in advance.



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Attendance Policy



If a family needs to request leave of 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.

e. 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.

f. 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.

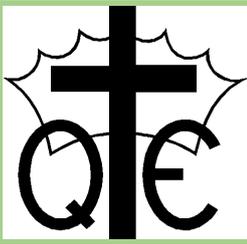
7. Penalty Notices

If you take your child/ren out of school without authority for 5 or more days (which do not need to be consecutive), you will be liable to receive a penalty notice. Currently the amount payable under a penalty notice is £60.00 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days. Thereafter the amount increases to £120.00 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority will consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Please note that penalty notices are issued per parent/carer per child so a family of two parents and two children will receive 4 penalty notices.

8. Deletions from Registers

Schools to be aware there is legislation around taking children off roll (Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and 2013).

- If a child moves schools during the year, they come off roll on the day they start the new provision.
- If the parent puts in writing that they intend to home educate, the matter should be referred to EHE and a copy of the letter attached. If the case is open to Inclusion a copy of the letter should be provided to the IO. The child can only be taken off roll if the parent specifies in writing that they intend to home educate.
- If the parent advises that they are moving abroad and school have any reason to suppose that this might not be true they should refer the matter to the Inclusion Service to investigate. Otherwise it is good practice to request this advice in writing from the parent so that this letter can be placed on the school file in explanation for taking the child off roll.



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9. Deletions After Continuous Absence Of Not Less Than 20 School Days

When taking children off roll due to twenty days absence and in order to comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 and the Education Act 1996, guidance states that schools **must** ensure that the following applies:

That the pupil has been continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than twenty school days and

(i) at no time was the absence during that period authorised

(ii) the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and

(iii) both the school **and** the local education authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.

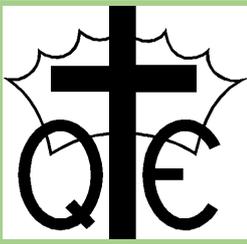
If any parts of this are not complied with, the pupil cannot be taken off roll and this may result in the school being vulnerable to legal action and having to put the pupil back on roll.

In the case of a pupil where the parent has requested a leave of absence of over twenty school days it is important that the school notifies the parent in writing that failure to return within the twenty days could result in the pupil being taken off roll. Once the absence begins, and within the twenty days, even if the school believe that the family are not at home, they must endeavour to make enquiries with the family and are advised to write to the home address stating that if the pupil does not return by a specified date, they will be taken off roll. At the same time, a referral should be made to the Inclusion Officer, as representative of the LA, for enquiries to be made.

If the pupil does not return by the specified date and enquiries have been made, the pupil can be taken off roll and the parents should be notified. It is not enough just to warn parents that the pupil may be taken off roll, enquiries must be made by school and the LA.

It is recommended that an entry is made in the School Attendance Policy to state that pupils may be at risk of losing a school place in cases of unauthorised absence.

For further information regarding when children can be taken off school's roll please contact your IO or the SW Inclusion Service on 01483 518187.



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Attendance Policy



10. Non-Starters

In DfE Statutory Guidance and Departmental Advice on School Attendance (August 2013) it advises that if a school is expecting a child to arrive at the beginning of term, the child **MUST** be put on the Admissions and Attendance register.

In the event of the child not arriving, the child must be marked as absent and enquiries made with Admissions. If Admissions confirm that the child has started at another school, the child can be taken off roll. However, if there is no record of the child starting anywhere else, school must refer to the Inclusion Service for a visit to be made and appropriate action can be taken to enforce attendance or establish what provision is being made.