

# Attendance Policy

**Rationale:** Connaught Junior School is committed in partnership with parents, pupils and governors to build a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud.

The school staff and governors believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. To this end, we will do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that the child/ren in their care achieve maximum possible attendance, and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly.

## Expectations

### We expect that all pupils will:

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

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

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the child/ren in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day
- ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/ren are unable to attend school
- contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, preferably before 9am
- contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

### We expect that school staff will:

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily
- monitor every pupil's attendance
- contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence
- follow up all unexplained absences
- encourage good attendance
- provide a welcoming atmosphere for children within a safe learning environment
- provide a sympathetic response to any pupil concerns
- make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly
- express their concern and clarify the school expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Surrey Attendance Officer.

## Grant for Leave of Absence

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we ask parents to take due consideration of these prior to booking a holiday, to ensure child/ren do not miss out on their education during term. If a family feels leave in term time is unavoidable due to special circumstances, they must write to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then decide whether to grant leave of absence. Parents are not entitled to leave of absence for their children as a right. Holidays taken during term time will not be

Headteacher: Miss S McGann

Deputy Headteacher: Miss K Whiting

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authorised. If the school decides not to authorise absence, a communication will be sent to parents informing them of this and any follow up action that may be taken.

Leave of absence for medical or religious observance will only be considered when supported by an official letter such as a hospital letter.

## **The Headteacher will decide whether or not to authorise the absence having considered:**

- the time of year proposed for the trip
- its nature and parental wishes
- the overall attendance pattern of the child
- the child's stage of education and potential impact on progress

## **Encouraging Attendance**

### **Connaught Junior School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:**

- by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- by responding promptly to a child's or parent's concern about the school or other pupils
- by marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration. If pupils arrive at the school gate after the close of the register (different year groups have different start times) without a written explanation, a late 'mark' will be recorded. If a child arrives late (half an hour after their year group arrives) it will be recorded as late 'absence' and counted as an unauthorised absence. Late and absent pupils are recorded on the school system and on red clipboards in the classroom, in case of a fire drill. Punctuality is strongly encouraged so that children are not missing out on their education through late arrival at school.
- by publishing attendance statistics
- by celebrating good and improved attendance
- by monitoring pupils, informing parents/carers, in writing, of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary, and referring the family to the Inclusion Office (or Traveller Services) at Surrey if the irregular attendance continues.

## **Responding to Non-Attendance**

### **When a pupil does not attend school, we will respond in the following manner:**

- On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 9.00am, the school will endeavour to contact them that day. If no response is received, the office staff will then phone other numbers on the contact list.
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If, by 10am, there is no response from the parent/care giver, and other attempts to reach them have failed, a home visit will be arranged for that day in the vast majority of cases. Once contact is made, the school will inform parents that, if the absence persists, that a referral will be made to the Inclusion Officer.
- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Inclusion Officer may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

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## Deletion from Registers

If a pupil fails to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date, the school will in the first instance check that the pupil does not have a good reason for the absence. The school will then make reasonable enquiries to locate the pupil and, having done so will advise the family in writing that they will need to provide evidence of why the return has been delayed i.e. medical evidence, within the next 10 days or the child will be removed from the school roll.

If, after taking these steps, the child has not returned or suitable evidence has not been provided then the child's name will be removed from the roll and the pupil's information will be sent to the Lost Pupil Database.

If parents request their child to be absent for more than 20 days they should be aware that their child's name will be removed from the school role, effective from the date of the first day of absence. Parents will need to re-apply for a place at the school on their return. However, due to a demand for places this may not be possible.

## Changing Schools

It is important that, if families decide to send the child/ren in their care to a different school, that they inform Connaught Junior School office 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 it is known

The pupil's 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 Inclusion Officer. Where there is an exceptional situation, the school will seek and follow guidance from the Inclusion Officer about how best to proceed.

## Penalty Notices

Absences during mock SATS and SATS examinations will not be authorised. Parents who persist in taking their child out of school during a period covered by these examinations, for five days or more without the authority of the Headteacher, will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice from Surrey County Council.

Penalty Notices may also be issued when a pupil is stopped by a Truancy Patrol. When pupils are stopped, their pattern of school attendance is investigated. If there is a minimum of 10 sessions (10 half days) unauthorised absence in the preceding 4 months, a warning letter may be sent to the parents/carers. If there is no significant improvement in attendance in the subsequent 15 school days, a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent/carer by Surrey County Council.

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, Surrey County Council is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance. Where leave of absence has not been granted and a pupil is taken on holiday during term time for 5 days or more without the authority of the headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child. These are issued by officers of Surrey County Council and not the school.

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A Penalty Notice will also be issued where at least 10 sessions (5 school days) have been lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during a half term period and where attendance falls below 85%.

## School Organisation

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

### **Headteacher, governors and designated members of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:**

- Adopt the whole policy
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided
- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence
- Key staff will liaise and follow-up work with the Inclusion Officer and appropriate access to attendance data
- Consult and liaise closely with the Inclusion Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
- To work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Officer during their termly/half termly register analysis
- Set whole school attendance targets
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with the Inclusion Officer

### **Office Staff:**

- to oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually
- to liaise with the Inclusion Officer regularly
- to reinforce good practice
- to share the class teacher's concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Inclusion Officer and Headteacher
- To record all reasons for absences in the register/ system

### **Class Teachers:**

- To complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- To record all reasons for absences in the register/ system if known, or advise the office staff to do so
- To follow up absences with parents/carers in the first instance
- To inform the Head Teacher of continuing concerns
- To be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Head Teacher.

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Approved By: LAB  
Review: Aut 2025



## Safeguarding

We will continue to apply all safeguarding responsibilities connected to pupil attendance at school as detailed in the attendance and safeguarding policy.

Non-attendance of timetabled pupils will be followed up in the usual way and the reason for absence will be documented on ScholarPack.

Where every effort has been made to contact a family of a child that has failed to attend and there are safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be required.

No staff member should enter the property and staff members should carry out the home visit in pairs.

If further concerns are raised, reporting should take place through the normal channels.

### Guidance for staff when undertaking **Home Visits**:

- Do not enter the home.
- Knock on the door and then speak to parent/carer and child from a safe distance from the front door.
- It is important to physically see the child, even if only through a window.
- The home visit must be completed with another member of staff.

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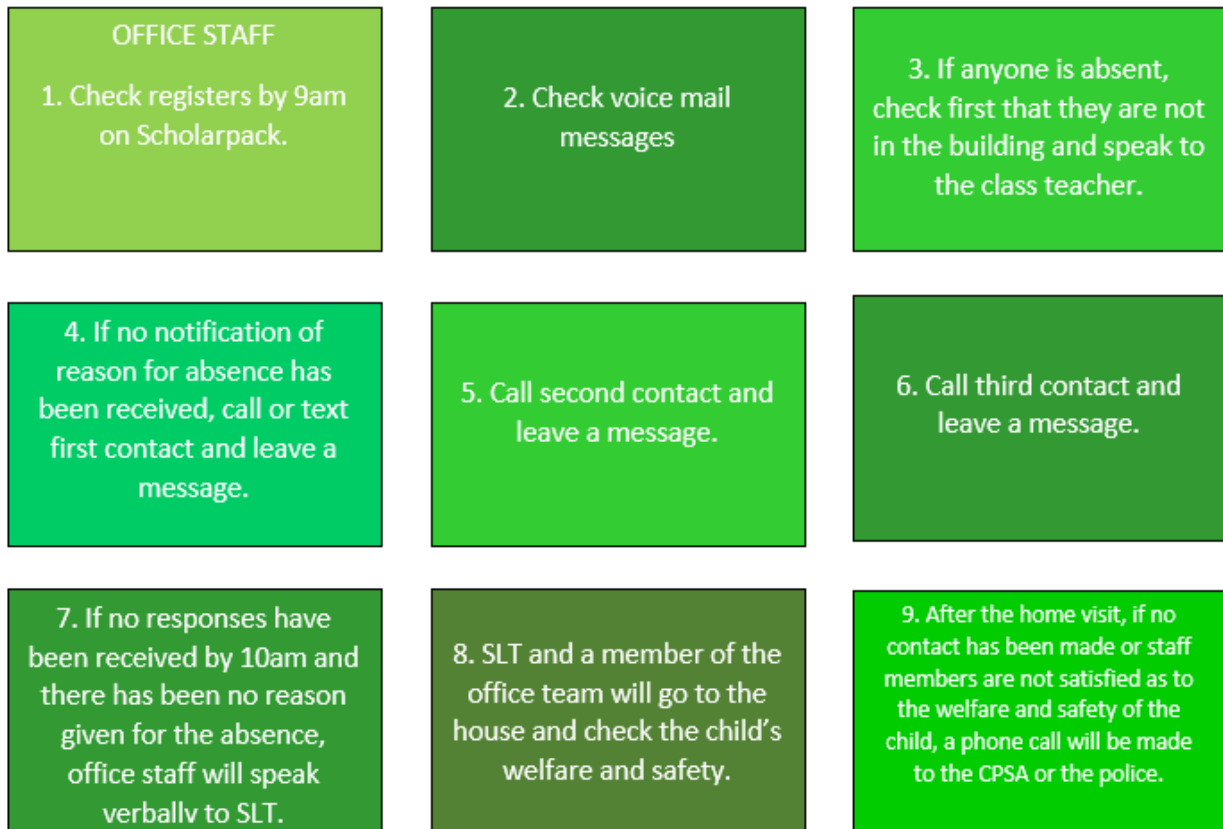
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## Procedural Flow-Chart for Unexplained Absences



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## TEACHING STAFF

Complete registers immediately after they enter the classroom as possible.

Any child that comes in after the class teacher has completed the register, must be sent to the office to be registered.

If class teachers have not heard why someone is absent, they must contact the office by lunchtime at the latest to find out the reason why.

Do not assume that children are on holiday because this is what you have heard from their friends, or that the office staff know the reason why a child is absent. You must always check.

It is the responsibility of us all so supply teachers must be informed by the class teacher themselves (if this is a planned absence) or the Head of Year or TA supporting in that classroom. Supply teachers are also informed via the supply teacher pack.

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