



Attendance Policy & Penalty Notice

Responsibility: Pastoral Deputy Headteacher

Approved: November 2023

Next Review: November 2024





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1. Introduction & Aims

Our mission at Salesian is to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all the children in our school. We are committed, in partnership with the parents, students, governors, and the Local Authority, to building a School which serves the community commendably, and of which the community is proud.

The school staff, alongside the Trust, firmly believes that regular school attendance is key to achieving strong results. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. To this end we will do all we can to encourage parents and guardians to ensure that the children in their care achieve the best possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted on promptly. In this policy, 'school' refers both to the school and the college unless otherwise stated.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation & Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility](#)





[measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles & Responsibilities

The Governors

The Governors are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Pastoral Deputy (designated senior leader responsible for attendance)

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

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- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Ben McCann and can be contacted via bmccann@salesian.surrey.sch.uk or calling 01932 582520.

The Attendance Officer

The school Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Keeping regular and accurate records of attendance for all students
- Contact parents/carers on the same day when a student fails to attend.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Ania Braga and can be contacted via attendance@salesian.surrey.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers and form tutors

Class teachers and form tutors will:

- Uphold responsibility for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office via Arbor each lesson.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and a safe learning environment
- Report an unplanned absent student immediately by emailing attendance@salesian.surrey.sch.uk

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take emails from Parents/Carers/Guardians about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Head of Year or Deputy Head of Year in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

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3.7 Parents/Carers/Guardians

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time and fully prepared for the day
- Email the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Read all school communications
- Attend parent meetings
- Encourage regular attendance, be aware of their legal responsibilities and support their child in adhering to the attendance policy
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details or personal circumstances
- Not take their children on holidays during term time
- Support their child to catch up on any work missed when absent from school.

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every day and every lesson on time
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their Form Tutor, Deputy Head of Year, Head of Year, Head of Learning Support or relevant member of the Leadership Team, any problems that deter them from attending the School
- Comply with any sanctions and requests and complete missed work if absent from school

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The bell for registration rings each morning at 8:45am. Students who arrive after 8:50am will be recorded as late to school. Close of morning register is 9:20am.

The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1:30pm and will be kept open until 2:00pm.

The school day ends at 3:10pm unless otherwise stated.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer/guardian must notify the school of the reason for the absence each day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by emailing attendance@salesian.surrey.sch.uk.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers/guardians will be notified.

4.3 Planned absence

Students are not permitted to leave the premises without prior permission from the school. Attending a medical or dental appointment may be authorised. To request an absence for a medical or dental appointment please email attendance@salesian.surrey.sch.uk in advance of the appointment. Students must sign out on leaving the school and sign back in upon their return. Where a student is being collected from school, parents/carers/guardians are requested to report to the School reception desk before the student is permitted to leave the School site.

However, we encourage parents/carers/guardians to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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The student's parent/carer/guardian must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Lateness to school without reason or an avoidable reason will result in a lunchtime detention served that day.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Contact the student's parent/carer/guardian on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. Contact will be made via automated text message, email or by telephone
- If there is no response and the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the situation will be escalated to a DSL who may contact the police to inform them of a missing child
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer/guardian on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

In addition, when a student has truanted the school will:

- The school will undertake the necessary steps it deems appropriate following the unauthorised absence to ensure all work missed is completed at school under supervision.
- Persistent truancy will involve a meeting between the school and parents/carers/guardians to discuss measures to be taken to prevent further issues and referral to the inclusion officer.

4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers/Guardians

The school will regularly inform Parents/Carers/Guardians about their child's attendance and absence levels by including attendance statistics on student progress reports.

5. Authorised & Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

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The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, by emailing the students Head of Year. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision

5.2 Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance, and we expect parents to book their family holidays in these periods. If there are exceptional circumstances that mean a family wish to request absence for a holiday in term time they should do so by emailing their child's Head of Year at least three weeks in advance. If the Headteacher does not authorise the absence the student will be expected to make up all time missed from school and the family will be issued a penalty notice as outlined in section 5.3.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer/guardian must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, Local Authority Officer or the police.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Salesian 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 concerns about the school or other students
- by marking registers accurately and punctually
- by celebrating good and improved attendance.
- by monitoring students and informing parent of any attendance concerns.

7. Attendance Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

Salesian School will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

Salesian School will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

Salesian School will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Pastoral Leaders at least fortnightly to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:



- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Write to parents to outline attendance concerns
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers/guardians of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Close monitoring and provide access to internal support services to remove any barriers to attendance
 - Pastoral team (DHoY, HoY, LT)
 - Chaplaincy team
 - Well-being councilor (SBY)
 - ELSA Lead (SSA)
 - Inclusion Lead (TWT)
- Provide access to wider external support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as Surrey County Council Inclusion Officer (Sue Jones)

8. Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform the school as soon as possible. A student will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- the reason for wishing to leave
- the date the student will be leaving Salesian School and starting the new school
- the address of the new school
- the new home address, if it is known and is applicable
- the student's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by Ben McCann, Pastoral Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy



Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

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E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed



Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: [Penalty Notices](#) information from Surrey County Council

What will happen if my child does not attend school?

Due to the reorganisation of Surrey County Council, the Education Welfare Service is now called the Inclusion Service.

The Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure their children of compulsory school age receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. Ordinarily, this involves ensuring children attend school regularly and punctually during term time.

Only your child's school can authorise an absence from school. If your child is absent without good reason it will be recorded as [unauthorised](#).

Surrey County Council has a statutory duty to enforce regular school attendance and the [Inclusion Service](#) is designated to carry out this duty on their behalf. The Inclusion Service and schools can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without a good reason.

- [What can parents do to ensure good attendance at school](#)
- [Prosecution for failing to ensure regular attendance](#)
- [School Attendance Order](#)
- [Penalty Notice fine](#)
- [Education Supervision Order](#)
- [Help and contacts](#)



Prosecution for failing to ensure regular school attendance

A parent is guilty of an offence if their child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly - Section 444(1) Education Act 1996. In such a situation if the parent knows that their child is not attending they may be prosecuted for a more serious offence – Section 444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996.

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

More information can be found here: [The court process - advice to parents](#)

School Attendance Order

A Parent/Carer/Guardian 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.

Penalty Notice fine

Penalty Notices are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents. They can be issued to **each** parent liable for the attendance offence or offences. Under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 a 'parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

Penalty Notices are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided.

Penalty Notices can only be issued by a headteacher or someone authorised by them (a deputy or assistant head), a local authority officer or the police. All schools and the police must send copies of penalties issued to the local authority.

Penalty Notices can be used where the student's absence has not been authorised by the school. Penalty Notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.

The amount payable under a penalty notice is currently £60 per parent or carer per notice if paid within 21 days. Thereafter the amount increases to £120 per parent or carer per notice. If the penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority will consider a prosecution under s444 Education Act 1996.

If you have been issued with a Penalty Notice and wish to pay it over the phone you can call the number contained in the [contacts](#) section. Alternative methods of payment are outlined on the Penalty Notice.



Education Supervision Order

When it is clear that a parent is fully cooperating with the school and Inclusion Service in trying to ensure their child's regular school attendance and it is the child who is resisting these attempts, the Local Authority may apply to the Family Law Court for an Education Supervision Order in respect of the child under Section 36 Children Act 1989.

An Education Supervision Order is a court order that formalises the plan drawn up by the Inclusion Service in partnership with the child, parents and school as well as other agencies if appropriate, to bring about a return to regular school attendance.

- [Education Supervision Orders – advice to parents](#)
- [Education Supervision Orders – advice to students](#)

Help and contacts

The legal process is dealt with by Court Presentation Officers. There are two Court Presentation Officers that work with schools based on the East and West side of Surrey.

West Surrey:

Adelina Ciobanu
Assistant Court Presentation Officer
Inclusion Service
Surrey County Council
Quadrant Court
35 Guildford Road
Woking
GU22 7QQ

Tel: 01483 517874

East Surrey:

Catherine Jones
Court Presentation Officer
Inclusion Service
Surrey County Council
Woodhatch Place
11 Cockshot Hill
Reigate
RH2 8EF

Tel: 07891 481 298