

What happens if my child has an unauthorised absence?

As a parent, it is your responsibility to make sure your child attends school every day they possibly can.

If your child is absent from school and you haven't phoned in on the absence line, we will contact you to find out why they are absent, and to check that you are aware that they are not in school.

Certain types of absence will be marked as unauthorised. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Head of School, time off for holidays is always unauthorised.

Absences where the parents haven't given the school a reason are also recorded as unauthorised.

If your child is absent frequently because of illness, we may ask for medical evidence (such as a doctor's appointment card or a prescription) to make sure the right support is given.

If your child is late to school and arrives after the registers have closed at 9.30 am, they will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

If your child is persistently absent, school will make a referral to the Inclusion Service at Surrey County Council. Persistent absence (PA) is defined as an attendance of 90% or below. The Inclusion Officer will discuss your child's attendance with you, and draw up a plan to help you make sure they get to school every day.

You may be asked to sign a school attendance agreement stating that you will work with the Inclusion Service and/or school to improve your child's attendance.

Ultimately, if your child continues to miss school, legal action can be taken. Consequences include a parenting order compelling you to do what the court says to improve your child's attendance; a fine of £60, rising to £120 if you don't pay within 21 days; and prosecution, which could lead to a community service order, a fine of up to £2,500, or a custodial sentence of up to three months.