



Christleton Primary School
Be the best you can be

Attendance Policy

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Signed Chair of Governors	<i>J. Eaton</i>		

Christleton Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance Policy Statement:

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

Christleton Primary school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s), local community, the Education Improvement Partnership and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Aims:

- ✔ To improve the quality of school life
- ✔ To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'
- ✔ To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s)/carer(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- ✔ To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions
- ✔ To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive

Objectives:

- ✔ To involve the children or young people more in their school attendance
- ✔ To improve communication with parent(s)/carer(s) about regular school attendance
- ✔ All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children or young people's attendance
- ✔ To recognise the important role of class teachers and/or learning mentors in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- ✔ To ensure time and organisation within the school to enable the aims and objectives to be met
- ✔ Effective working relationship with Education Welfare Service, and the reporting of half-termly figures to the service

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- ✔ Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- ✔ Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- ✔ Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- ✔ Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- ✔ Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- ✔ Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- ✔ Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- ✔ Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- ✔ Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- ✔ The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- ✔ Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- ✔ Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- ✔ Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- ✔ Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- ✔ Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- ✔ Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- ✔ Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The designated individual in the school office is responsible for:

- ✔ Working with the headteacher to apply the strategic approach to attendance in school.
- ✔ Working with the headteacher to develop a clear vision for improving attendance.
- ✔ Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- ✔ Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement and sharing this with the headteacher.
- ✔ Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- ✔ Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- ✔ Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- ✔ Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- ✔ Arriving punctually at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- ✔ Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- ✔ Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- ✔ Updating the school if their details change.
- ✔ The attendance of their children at school.
- ✔ Promoting good attendance with their children.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- ✔ Arrival at school after the register has closed
- ✔ Not attending the registered school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- ✔ An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- ✔ Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- ✔ Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave

Unauthorised absence:

- ✔ Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- ✔ Absences which have never been properly explained
- ✔ Arrival at school after the register has closed
- ✔ Absence due to looking after other children or birthdays
- ✔ Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- ✔ Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- ✔ Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Missing education

- ✔ Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

We strive to maintain an attendance percentage above national and monitor and intervene when a child's attendance drops below 96%.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school gates open at 08:40 with the children expected to be in their classroom by 08:50. Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- ④ The morning register will be marked by 9:05am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- ④ The morning register will close at 9:20am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- ④ The afternoon register will be marked by 1:00pm. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time
- ④ The afternoon register will close at 1:10pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present

Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- ④ Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- ④ Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- ④ Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- ④ Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than three school days in a row, or more than 10 school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 85 percent, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Targets:

- ✔ To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- ✔ To discuss the setting of targets for the school with the Education Welfare Officer and the School Improvement Partner
- ✔ To ensure that such data is available and used effectively by school managers and staff in conjunction with the EWO
- ✔ To agree specific targets for individuals, groups, years and the whole school in a context of all known relevant factors and record these where appropriate
- ✔ To target resources in order to improve attendance and implement strategies where most appropriate and to undertake this within a reasonable time frame
- ✔ To keep parent(s)/carer(s), pupils and governors, the Education Improvement Partnership and the Local Authority informed of policy and practice
- ✔ To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for some vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children or Young People.
- ✔ That the attendance % at Christleton Primary School is consistently above national.
- ✔ That any child falling below 96% attendance is monitored and interventions are put in place to improve their attendance overtime.

Consultation Process:

Parent(s)/carer(s) will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- ✔ When their children first start at our school
- ✔ Home school agreements
- ✔ Through newsletters
- ✔ At parent(s)/carer(s) evenings

Children or young people will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- ✔ In assemblies
- ✔ In the classroom
- ✔ During appropriate areas of the curriculum.

Procedure: Registration of Pupils

- ✔ Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
 - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
 - Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)
- ✔ It is expected that parent(s) or carers will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent on every day the absence occurs, at the start of the school day by 9.30am.
- ✔ If contact, explaining the child or young person's absence, fails to be made by parent(s) or carer/s, then the school will attempt to contact the home. If contact is not made, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Frequent occurrences will result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.
- ✔ The head teacher will regularly remind parent(s)/carer(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality. (Fortnightly attendance percentages are provided for each cohort within the newsletter)
- ✔ At the end of the academic year children or young people with 100% attendance will be recognised by the school.

Completing the Register

- ✔ The school uses SIMS to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.
- ✔ Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. by 9.05 am and 1.10 pm respectively.
- ✔ Registers provide the twice daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents that may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school.
- ✔ Registers closed at 09:20 in the morning and 13:15 in the afternoon. They are checked by the administration staff between 09:20 and 09:30 and 13:15 – 13:30.
- ✔ Absences and missing marks are checked and followed up by administration staff - initial checks for absent children are made in the classroom and with siblings. If a pupil is not present and no message has been received from the parents, a telephone call is made to the parents by 9.30 am.
- ✔ Administration staff keep a record of the steps they have taken to locate absent children – this includes pupil names, year group, classroom checks, checks with siblings, time phone call was made home, reasons for absence and if any further action is required.
- ✔ The data from the class registers is transferred to Sims.net weekly on Friday afternoons or as soon as possible thereafter
- ✔ The member of staff completing the register applies the Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) codes and guidelines for entries and absences. Any mistakes made in the register e.g. if a child is marked in error then the correction is made at the bottom of the column for that day, signed and dated.
- ✔ The Head Teacher checks the data print out against the registers periodically.
- ✔ The registers and data base are checked by Education Welfare twice yearly and if there are any children whose attendance is causing concern then this may be followed up by a visit from them
- ✔ A print out of the official register is made termly and submitted to CWAC as part of the School Census, a copy of which is kept on file.

- ☑ The School governors, through the Head teacher, check the school procedures for Registration annually.
- ☑ Schools are responsible to ensure that storage of information complies with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998
- ☑ Electronic registers have to be backed up on external servers at least once a week. **These are legal documents.**

Register Codes

This register will record whether pupils are:

- ☑ Present.
- ☑ Absent.
- ☑ Attending an approved educational visit.
- ☑ Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- ☑ # = planned whole or partial school closure
- ☑ / = Present in the morning
- ☑ \ = Present in the afternoon
- ☑ L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- ☑ C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- ☑ E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- ☑ H = Authorised holiday
- ☑ I = Illness
- ☑ M = Medical or dental appointments
- ☑ R = Religious observance
- ☑ B = Off-site education activity
- ☑ G = Unauthorised holiday
- ☑ = Unauthorised absence
- ☑ U = Arrived after registration closed
- ☑ N = Reason not yet provided
- ☑ X = Not required to be in school
- ☑ T = Traveller absence
- ☑ V = Educational visit or trip
- ☑ P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- ☑ D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- ☑ Y = Exceptional circumstances
- ☑ Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

Identification & Referral

- ✔ Identification is made by the class teacher and/or office administrator (cause for concern) e.g. their attendance has fallen below 90% or there is a particular pattern of absence such as persistent lateness.
- ✔ Concerns are passed to the Headteacher or attendance lead which will be relayed to the parent(s)/carer(s) verbally and/or by letter
- ✔ Following this letter, there will be monitoring of the child's attendance
- ✔ If there is no or insufficient improvement, at this point, a further letter may be sent and parent(s)/carer(s) can be invited in for a meeting
- ✔ If there is no improvement, consideration will be given regarding a referral to the Education Welfare Service
- ✔ Parental duty will be re-enforced to ensure full school attendance and offer support by providing links to other agencies as appropriate
- ✔ A referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s) and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate.

Lateness

Pupils who are late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. School begins at 8.50 am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time.

Fifteen minutes after the close of registration a late mark becomes an unauthorised absence. The register will officially close at 9.05am after this time a child will be coded "L"

After 09:20 the absence will be recorded as "U" which statistically counts as an unauthorised absence.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken. In the first instance this will involve a discussion with the parent or carer followed by a letter home if the situation does not improve.

After a child has accrued 10 late marks a Fixed Penalty Notice may be instigated. If issued, a penalty of £80 per parent is payable within 21 days of issue. If unpaid this will increase to £160 to be paid within 21 days. Failure to pay may result in the Local Authority instigating legal proceedings where parents/carers may face a fine of up to £2,500.*

The guidance below seeks to inform parents/carers about children arriving late to school. The procedure will be as follows:

08:40	School gates and classroom doors open. Children are able to come into the classrooms and complete their morning activity
08:50-09:00	Register is taken with any missing child receiving a circle at the time of registration.
09:05	Register completed
09:05-09:20	Child enters late. An L is inserted into the circle up to 9.20am.
09:20	Register is closed and taken to the school office.
09:20	09:20 onwards: Child enters late. A U is entered in the circle for that child to indicate late after registration has closed.

Family Holidays during term time

Parent(s)/carer(s) are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. Parent(s)/carer(s) do not have the right to take their child or young person out of school for such a holiday. Head Teachers can only authorise holidays during term-time in very exceptional circumstances, as follows which are all at the Headteacher's discretion:

- ✔ Armed services returning from tour of duty where holiday could not be taken in school holiday time
- ✔ Family respite
- ✔ Family Crisis – (looked after children, adoption, bereavement, severe medical needs)
- ✔ Religious observance day
- ✔ Examinations
- ✔ Return to homeland (long distance visit to family members) 20 days' maximum.
- ✔ Approved sporting activity P code to be used
- ✔ Urgent medical appointments (routine appointments should be made outside of school hours)

Any other circumstances that do not meet the criteria stated above will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Any leave of absence request form must be completed for consideration by the Headteacher prior to any absence from school.

A child or young person who is absent longer than 20 days after the agreed return date can legally be removed from the school roll and will no longer have a place at this school.

If a parent/carers chooses to take their child out of school for 5 days or more without the approval of the Head Teacher they may be issued with a **Fixed Penalty Notice**.

What can parent(s)/carer(s) do to help?

- ✔ Let the school know as soon as possible why your child or young person is absent
- ✔ Reinforce to your child the importance of attending school
- ✔ Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary
- ✔ Be punctual

If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

- ✔ Talk to your child; it may be something simple
- ✔ Talk to the head teacher and staff at the school
- ✔ Talk to the Education Welfare Service

You may contact the Education Welfare Officer, who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation.

The school aims to have ALL children or young people attending regularly and punctually and parent(s)/carer(s) need to know that should their child fail to attend in this way then the matter may be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority in the School Development Plan. This aims to improve the attainment of minority pupils across the county. Schools are aware and take into account the need for all public authorities to re-examine and make changes to their practice in promoting genuine multi-racial partnership.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parent(s)/carer(s) and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.