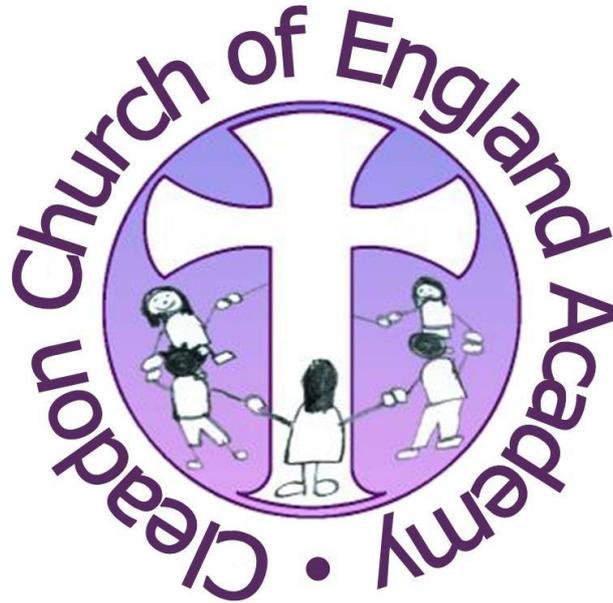


Cleadon Church of England Academy



School Attendance Policy

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Governing Body: 7th March 16
Adopted:
Date of Next Review: Autumn 2019

Cleadow Church of England Academy

School Attendance Policy 2016

Statement of intent:^[1]_{SEP}

The school aims to work together with parents to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend both regularly and punctually.

Parents' responsibilities:

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.
- Parents should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as illness, they should contact the school by 9.30am on the first morning of absence. This may be done by phone, by letter or in person. Verbal messages on the parent's behalf from an adult relative or representative such as a childminder or friend may be accepted at the school's discretion on the first day of absence – subsequent absences must be explained by the parent. Verbal messages from children, e.g. siblings, will not be accepted. (See Appendix 1 – first day contact guidelines).
- Parents may not authorise their child's absence – only the school can do this, on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason, the school will record such absences as unauthorised. In some cases, this may be retrospective and authorisation may be withdrawn should circumstances arise leading the school to decide that the reason given was not truthful. If this occurs, this will be discussed with the parent.
- Parents should ensure that their child arrives on time for the start of registration (8.55am). Children arriving after this time should report to the school office and the parent should sign the Late Book. (In the case of older unaccompanied children, the child should follow this procedure).
- Parents should avoid booking family holidays during term-time. Such holidays will not be authorised. (See Appendix 2 – term-time holidays).^[1]_{SEP}

School responsibilities:

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress and personal wellbeing.
- Registers will be taken twice daily (at 8.55am in all classes, 1pm in KS2 and EYFS and 1.15pm in KS1). Registers will close at 9.00, 1.05 and 1.20pm. Any child arriving after the close of the registration period will be recorded as "late" for that session.
- Teachers will complete registers in accordance with guidance given by the Headteacher. Registers will be monitored regularly in order to ensure that they are being satisfactorily maintained and to identify any potential attendance problems at an early stage.
- Class teachers should raise any concerns about a child's attendance and punctuality with their senior manager / team leader.
- Should a child be absent, the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. Should no explanation have been received, the class teacher will inform staff in the office, who will endeavour to make contact with the parent.

- All absence notes from parents should be dated and initialled by the class teacher and returned to the office with the register, where they will be stored. Only notes regarding absences where there are concerns need be brought to the attention of the Headteacher, who may then choose to speak to the parents.
- Senior managers will regularly collect attendance data and use this during meetings with the Attendance Officer and Learning Mentor. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify tasks and follow-up actions for both the school and the Attendance Officer. Other agencies, such as Social Care, may also be involved.
- Cleadon Church of England Academy will employ a number of strategies to promote regular attendance, including: publishing clear attendance information in the school's prospectus; appropriate personal encouragement for particular children; weekly class certificates; annual certificates and prizes. ^[SEP]

Persistent absentees: ^[SEP]

Persistent absentees are defined as children whose attendance is below 90% and where unsatisfactory reasons are given for absence. However, the procedures outlined below may apply to children whose attendance is above 90% but where there are concerns about deteriorating attendance or where patterns are emerging, e.g. regular absences on particular days or persistent lateness. ^[SEP] All of the above policy applies to persistent absentees, with the following additions:

- Children's names are recorded in the Persistent Absentee file in the front office. All class teachers are aware who these children are.
- Any messages received regarding absence of these children are recorded in this file.
- If no message is received the office staff must be informed and must attempt to contact the parent at the earliest opportunity. If no contact is made or the message received is unsatisfactory, Services for Young People will be contacted. Again, all this should be recorded in the Attendance file.

Appendix 1 – First Day Contact Guidelines

First day contact is a widely used practice in schools and has been shown to improve attendance rates. The correct procedure at the Academy is as follows:

1. As soon as the registers are returned to the office, staff check absentees against messages received.
2. For persistent absentees, see the relevant section above. For other pupils for whom no message has been received, staff will attempt to make contact with the parent at the earliest opportunity.
3. When contact is made, the parent will be asked for the reason for absence. In the event that no proper reason is supplied, the parent will be informed that the absence will not be authorised.
4. Where no contact is made, a message should be left asking the parent to contact the school. Where it is impossible to leave a message, a note should be sent.
5. Reasons for absence are then added to the register. 

Appendix 2 – Requesting Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to maximise their educational opportunities. Interruptions in school attendance disrupt continuity of learning and have a negative impact on attainment.^[SEP]It is the school's responsibility to provide the best education possible. We can only do this if child/ren attend regularly. There is a direct correlation between achievement and attendance, well before GCSE.

'Exceptional' circumstances are likely to be one-off situations due to a parent's employment conditions or a trauma or bereavement in the family.

The Government's guidance states that only under exceptional circumstances may the Headteacher consider giving permission for a child to be absent from school. The regulations make it clear that **head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time for the purpose of a family holiday.**

At the Academy the following reasons will be classed as exceptional circumstances;

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Parents' employment restrictions – there are few employers who restrict their employees' holiday leave. Evidence from the employer will be required to support the application.
- To have a short absence (up to 5 school days) to attend a special religious/cultural festival,

The following circumstances will **not** be considered 'exceptional':

- Relatives coming to visit
- Holidays
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different half terms or holidays

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices for failure to ensure regular school attendance.

- Parents or carers who take their children on holiday in term time or for reasons other than exceptional circumstances may receive a Penalty Notice fine of £60 per child, which must be paid within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. Where a fine remains unpaid after 42 days, the matter will be referred to the Borough Solicitor, who will consider instigating criminal proceedings.

Should you wish to apply for your child's absence from school you are requested to complete the section below and return the form at least 1 month prior to the planned absence to the school office.

Cleadon Church of England Academy

Leave of Absence Form

PARENTAL REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

You should be aware that any absence from school, for whatever reason, will potentially have a detrimental effect on your child's learning and progress.

Authorisation will only be granted in **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**.

Should you wish to apply for your child's absence from school you are requested to complete the section below and return the form at least 1 month prior to the planned absence to (eg Head Teacher, Head of Year):

.....

NB: Requests received within a month of the planned absence are likely to be refused.

PUPILS NAME:	FORM:
ABSENCE REQUESTED FROM:	TO:

***REASON FOR THIS REQUEST:**

I request permission for my child to be absent from school on the above dates. I understand that this absence will disrupt my child's learning. I will ensure that my child returns to school immediately after the agreed last date of absence and that all work missed will be completed.

SIGNED (Parent/Guardian):	DATE:
----------------------------------	--------------

For School Use only:

Date received:			
Attendance percentage to date over the last 3 years:	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Previous requests: (Please delete as appropriate)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO
Request approved/denied:			
Date parent(s) informed of decision:			
Signed:		Date:	