



Clayton Village Primary School

Pupil Attendance Policy

September 2018

Introduction

It is important that you and your child develop a positive attitude to school attendance and punctuality so that they do not miss out on the opportunities at school. These qualities of reliability are also important in adult life.

Poor attendance, especially when condoned by parents, disrupts a child's education. This causes a lack of continuity and progression in school work and can establish patterns of behaviour which may lead to long-term truancy.

Clayton Village Primary School will work closely with other partners to ensure this policy is fulfilled and including the Department for Education (DfE) and the Education Social Work Service.

Aim

This policy aims to improve pupils' attendance at school and to ensure that absence from school only occurs when pupils have a genuine reason.

This policy aims to help parents understand the importance of regular school attendance to pupil's educational success and seeks to gain the support of parents in its implementation.

Legislative Framework

Parent/guardian, schools and the Local Authority have legal responsibilities in ensuring that children attend school.

Parent/guardians of children of compulsory school age must ensure that their children receive an efficient and full-time education, either at school or otherwise (Education Act 1944 S.36).

Schools must maintain an attendance register in which each pupil is marked present or absent at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session (Pupils' Registration Regulation 1956).

Schools must publish attendance data showing the number of unauthorised absences in each term of the preceding school year, expressed a percentage of the total number of possible attendances that term (The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991).

Partnership between parents/carers and the school:

- Attendance and punctuality is regarded by the school as the responsibility of the whole school community. All school staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils must work in partnership to ensure regular attendance, so that pupils have the opportunity to reach their potential.
- The responsibilities of the school, parents/carers and pupils with regard to attendance and punctuality are detailed within the Home School Agreement.
- The school newsletter and website carries regular items on attendance and/or punctuality.

School responsibilities to improve attendance and punctuality:

The school undertakes to:

- Provide a stimulating and differentiated curriculum so that pupils enjoy learning and want to come to school.
- To notify the Education Officer in accordance with legislation of irregular attendance and of continuous absences of more than 2 weeks which are not covered by medical certificate or prior authorisation.
- Work within the school pastoral system to support pupils experiencing difficulties e.g. support from the Learning Mentor, invites to breakfast club.
- Provide for the individual needs of all pupils offering an inclusive environment where all pupils can achieve success.
- Complete registration accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon using the appropriate codes, noting reasons for absence and times of arrival if late. Guidelines are available for teaching and supply staff from the attendance and admissions officer in the administration team.
- Telephone parents/carers on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received.
- Record times of arrival of pupils coming to school late.
- Contact parents to follow up unexplained or unauthorised absences and persistent lateness.
- Follow the local authority guidance on missing children
- Monitor the attendance of individual pupils and families and work closely with the attendance and welfare advisor to identify concerns and bring about improvements in attendance through telephone calls, interviews and home visits.
- To work collaboratively with other agencies eg Social Workers , Child Protection Officers
- Provide parents/carers with a printed record of their child's attendance in the Annual Report.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly – “Every day matters.”
- Arrive for school and lessons on time – “Every minute counts.”

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Let the school know at the start of the school day, by telephone or by sending a note with a sibling, that a child is ill or give any other reasons for absence. If you have been informed that your child is a persistent absentee any absences will not be authorised without medical evidence or other proof.
- Inform the school again if absence is likely to continue beyond three days. A note, a medical certificate or proof of medication should be sent to confirm the reasons for the absence.
- Make medical appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the school must be informed in advance of pending appointments. The pupil must be signed out at the administration office when taken out of school during school hours by a parent/carer.
- Attend scheduled meetings regarding concerns about the attendance and or punctuality of their children with the Assistant Headteacher and Learning Mentor.
- Parents/carers must apply in advance for permission for any exceptional absence e.g. a funeral.
- Take holidays or trips abroad during school holidays.

Primary School Attendance Procedure

Procedures in this policy take in to consideration statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education, (DfE) and LA.

Daily/Weekly Attendance Procedure

- If your child is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian must ring school before **8.30am** or as close to this time as possible to inform school of the reason for the absence.
- Registers are taken at 8.50am. Any children who arrive after 8.50am must sign in at the office.
- Registers officially close at 9.10am. If your child arrives between 8.50am and 9.10am then they are recorded as 'late before register closes'.
- Children who arrive after 9.10am are recorded as 'late after register closes'. These children must be signed in by an adult with a valid reason for being late.
- At 9.30am school registers are checked for any absences for which we have no information.
- School staff will make a call to the parent/guardian if there has been no contact with school regarding the absence.
- If a pupil has been absent and school have not been able to find out any reason for absence from the parent/guardian, a home visit will be made, at least within three days. A first day absence visit may be made if there are concerns such as family welfare or persistent absence.
- A child who is absent from school without an authorised reason will be marked as 'unauthorised' in the register.
- A child whose attendance has fallen below 96% will be monitored weekly

Categorising absence

The Education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991 require schools to determine whether an absence can be deemed to be authorised or whether the child should be regarded as being absent without permission i.e. truanting. In the terms of the legislation it is only the school who can approve the absence, not the parent. Here at Clayton Village Primary School absence will only be authorised for the following reasons:-

- i. Pupil illness.
- ii. Pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observation by the religious group to which the pupil's parents belong.
- iii. Pupil is participating in an approved public performance.
- iv. Permission has been granted by the Headteacher through the Absence Request Procedure (see below).
- v. Pupil is absent following the death of a close family member.
- vi. Pupil has a medical or dental appointment, confirmed with an appointment card/letter. The child is expected to attend school prior to the appointment or return to school after the appointment - where possible medical or dental appointments should be booked outside of school hours.

Monitoring Attendance

As a school we monitor all areas of attendance and are required to provide the DfE and Education Social Work Service with our attendance data.

- During assembly the school will share the attendance percentage for every class in that school week. The class with the best attendance will receive the attendance trophy.
- Every Monday the school website will publish attendance information for every class from the previous week
- Attendance will be monitored weekly for individuals who fall below 96%
- The parent/guardian of a child who falls below 96% in a week will be sent a text on the Friday of that week as a reminder to improve
- Class attendance percentages for the year will also be published on the school website at the end of the school year
- At the beginning of a new half term the attendance data from the previous term is analysed by the Attendance Officer

- The parent/guardian of **all** pupils with less than **90%** attendance will be sent a letter and printout of their child's attendance for that term. In addition the monitoring programme for pupils with attendance percentages between 90% and 80% will be half termly rather than termly
- Any child with an absence record below 90% is invited in to meet the Assistant Headteacher to discuss attendance targets for the following term

Persistent absentees

Pupils whose attendance is less than **90%** are referred to as "Persistent Absentees" by the DfE and will be considered for referral to the Education Social Work Service. The Education Welfare Officer and Headteacher will then begin a programme of monitoring and support.

- Step 1 – parent/guardian, Assistant Headteacher and the Education Welfare Officer meet to discuss the absences and agree an action plan to improve attendance.
- Step 2 – A letter summarising the discussion and a copy of the action plan is posted to the parent/guardian.
- Step 3 – After 6 weeks the attendance printout is reviewed by school staff and the Education Welfare Officer.
 - If the percentage has improved to above 90% half-termly monitoring is implemented.
 - If the percentage remains below 90% the parent/guardian is invited to a second meeting with school staff and the Education Welfare Officer to discuss the absences where further, more formal, actions are outlined.

If your child is persistently absent through illness, school will not authorise these absences unless specific medical evidence has been obtained by a medical professional

Requests for Leave of Absence

Absence for anything other than through illness or medical reasons during term time is actively discouraged. **If a request is made a meeting must first be held with the Assistant Headteacher to discuss the request.**

Parents requesting time out of school for their child during term time should obtain a 'Leave of absence' request form from the school office. **Holidays in term time WILL NOT be authorised.**

The DfE has published new amendments to the Pupil Registration Regulations which come into force from September 2013 and relate to Holidays in Term Time, Penalty Notices and Deletions from the school register.

The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher will determine 'exceptional circumstances' and also the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Each case will be reviewed on an individual basis and no precedence will be set by any one case. The Headteacher reserves the right to request evidence to support the leave of absence request prior to the decision being made.

If the school has grounds to believe a term time holiday has been taken without written request then this will be investigated by the school. If a child is absent from school for more than 5 days due to illness then medical evidence may be sought.

Leave of absence will not be granted during September to ensure that pupils have a settled start to the New Year nor in May or June when classes have their statutory assessments.

Penalty Notices

Parents who take their children out of school during term time without seeking permission or when permission has not been granted could be issued with a fixed Penalty Notice of £60 (per parent per child) which must be paid within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Any child who has six or more days unauthorized absence in a six week period (for unauthorized holidays) plus a total of ten unauthorized absence sessions across the academic year will be subject to a fine.

Leave of Absence due to Religious Observance

The school is keen to ensure children and adults from different faith backgrounds are able to celebrate religious festivals at the appropriate time they occur throughout the school year. The school will authorise **3 days** absence per academic year for recognised religious observance, regardless of faith. Parents and carers will need to request this leave of absence through the 'Leave of absence' request form from the school office.

Punctuality

It is important that pupils are punctual so that they do not miss out of the beginning of each school day. This time can be important because information is often given out which allows for the smooth running of the day and helps pupils feel part of the school community.

- The school opens its doors at 08.45am and pupils should be in school at this time to change from outdoor clothing. It is essential that your child is ready for registration at 08.50am prompt. All entrances with the exception of the main school entrance are closed at 08.50am.
- Pupils arriving after this time will have to report to the office where their names will be entered into the "late book" for safety reasons and monitoring of attendance.
- Any pupils who are late and miss any part of their lessons will need to catch up with their classteacher at break or lunchtime of that day.
- The "late book" is monitored weekly to identify the pupils who are persistently late.
- If a pupil arrives after the register has closed at 9.10am then they will lose their attendance mark for that morning which in turn impacts upon their overall attendance percentage.

- If pupils are late for school twice in a week a letter is sent to parent/guardian to inform them and request that this improves.
- If no improvement is made then the parent/guardian is invited to a meeting with school staff to discuss the situation and offer support if appropriate.
- **Persistent lates may be followed up with a penalty notice.**

Collection of children at the end of the day

The school finishes at 3.00pm and we expect pupils to be collected by an authorised person. School must be informed if the child is to be picked up by anybody other than the authorised person.

If any child is not picked up at the end of the day we will check for any messages to see if there are any changes to arrangements. We will contact parents/carers or another authorised adult at home or at work. In the meantime the child will wait by the office. If this is a regular occurrence parents/carers will be invited in to discuss this further.

If the child has not been collected after 1 hour and no contact has been made we will follow our Child Protection procedures and contact Social Services.

Attend and Achieve!

- ✓ If a school can **improve** attendance by **1%**, they will see a **5-6%** improvement in **attainment**. (DFE)
- ✓ Please **help** us and your child by ensuring their attendance remains above **96%**, allowing them to **achieve** their potential.

Attendance incentives

- At the start of the academic year 'great attendance' is the focus of a whole School assembly.
- Information of attendance targets and individual pupil attendance data will be provided for parents in the end of year Annual Reports
- In weekly celebration assemblies we will recognise high attendance
- The school website will display the class attendance figures for the week and end of year
- All children with 100% attendance and punctuality will be awarded a green certificate and any children with 96% attendance will receive a yellow certificate.

Entitlement and Equal Opportunities

All children have entitlement to education with full access to the National Curriculum. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and promptly, and school staff have an entitlement to carry out their roles without obstruction.

Policy approved by Head Teacher: Date:

Policy approved by Governing Body: (Chair of Governors) Date:

The date for the next policy review is.....