



Learn, Aspire, Achieve

Churwell Primary School Policy on Attendance

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.
- 1.2 The Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent or late

- 3.1 When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register. A Learning Mentor will contact a parent or guardian on the first day of absence.
- 3.2 A Parent or Carer needs to ring the school before 9.30am to explain the absence. If contact has not been made with the school this will result in a Learning Mentor contacting the Parent or Carer by phone initially and a home visit may also be made. If no reason for the absence has been given then the absence is marked as unauthorised.
- 3.3 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the Learning Mentors. The school will then be in contact straight away with the Parent or Carers, in order to check on the safety of the child.

- 3.5 Register will close at 9.00am – children who arrive after this time will be given the code L (late). Children who arrive after 9.30am will be given the code U (unauthorised).

Learning Mentors will follow this up with the parent/carer where appropriate and will monitor pupil's attendance where attendance falls below 90%. Action will be taken by inviting parents or Carers into school for a meeting, asking for evidence of medical appointments and/or referring to the School Nurse.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. Request for leave may only be granted in exceptional circumstances and a holiday would not be considered exceptional. Request for leave of absence must be made to the school in advance as the DfE have informed schools that they cannot authorise any absences after they have been taken. Parents may receive a penalty notice if their child is absent from school without permission.

Parents who take their children out of school for a holiday in the month of **September will be fined**; this is an agreement between all the schools in the Aspire Partnership. In addition to this a fine will also be made if a child's attendance is low and a holiday is taken or two holidays are taken in a specific academic year.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 If there is a long-term absence the school may make arrangements for the child to be given some work which can be completed at home.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the Parent or Carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences the school will follow the Attendance Monitoring Guidance flowchart as issued by the **Attendance Team of Leeds City Council. (See Appendix 1)** This may ultimately result in Parents or Carers being asked to attend a School Attendance Panel.
- 6.2 The Governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any Parents or Carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 Attendance awards are given weekly to classes with the highest attendance record in each key stage along with half termly badges for 100% attendance. There is an award for 100% attendance over the full year. There is also an 'I shine, I'm on time' award that is given to children who are on time and in school in a particular week.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the Local Authority and Governors at the start of the academic year. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools within the Aspire Partnership when setting its own targets.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors, through the Attendance Governor will examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

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- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the half termly Headteacher's report to Governors and by the Governor responsible for attendance.
- 9.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. Learning Mentors will follow up absences in the appropriate way. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Headteacher, who will support the Attendance Team and discuss issues with Parents or Carers.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

This policy was reviewed in February 2019