



Childs Hill School

Title:	Attendance
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Responsible Committee:	Pupil Welfare
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Review cycle:	Annually
Type of policy:	Statutory

Statement of Intent

- Childs Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all of our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.
- One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good, punctual attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. Childs Hill Primary School actively promotes 100% attendance for all of our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual rewards to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role, and a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and we promise to identify, investigate and work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and other agencies to resolve attendance and punctuality problems.

Statutory Framework

- Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act states that 'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend school regularly; his parent is guilty of an offence.'
- The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the Headteacher is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter or message will the absence be authorised.

Expectations and Responsibility

Pupil Responsibility

We expect that all pupils will;

- Attend school every day as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so

- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

Parental responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Full attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Poor attendance undermines their education and can put pupils at risk of educational under-achievement.

It is the parent's responsibility to;

- contact the school on the first day their child is absent, confirming the reason why they are not at school.
- Ensure their child(ren) arrives at school punctually and prepared for school day by 8.50am
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child(ren) away from school.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child(ren)
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

School responsibility

As a school we aim to;

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Maintain regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality data
- Contact parents on the first day of absence when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. In the case of the long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or medical evidence may be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition
- Regularly inform parents/carers of the % attendance of all children
- Make initial enquiries regarding children who are not attending regularly
- Meet with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare
- Notify the Local Authority after 15 days sickness

Important Definitions

- 1 school day = 2 sessions. Did you know this means one day off a week will make your child's attendance for that week 80%? If your child has 9 days off over the whole year their attendance will be approximately 95% for the year.
- Authorised Absence means an absence has been classified as authorised when a child is away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer.
- Unauthorised absences mean an absence when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Examples	Authorised absences:	Unauthorised absences:
	*genuine illness of the pupil; *hospital/dental/doctors appointment for the pupil where an alternative outside of school hours can't be made (evidence to be presented to the school) *major religious observances *visits to prospective new schools *external exams or educational assessments.	*shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park; *a birthday treat; *oversleeping due to a late night; *looking after other children / other family member; *appointments for other family members. *repeated illness without medical evidence.

Timeline of School Action for Low Attendance

Each child's attendance can be summarised as;

95.5% +	Great- well done!! This will help all aspects of your child's progress in school life. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic. Your child's attendance is at, or above the school target.
90%-95%	Below expected -strive to build on this. Your child's attendance is below expected and will be monitored. A letter may be sent to you to inform you of your child's attendance. (Appendix 1)
86%-89%	Poor - Absence is now significantly affecting your child's attainment and progress. This is a cause for concern and you will be required to meet with our attendance team, Sarah Nicholls (Senior Learning Mentor) and Sally Neaves (Assistant Head)
85% and below	'Persistent Absenteeism' . Absence is seriously affecting attainment and progress disrupting your child's development. Your child's attendance is now a major concern. It is probable that a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer will be made and a meeting will be convened at school to put in place strategies to improve attendance rapidly.

How and when to report an Absence to the school

All absences must be reported on a daily basis. In all cases the parents/carers should;

- only keep your child away from school if really necessary. The school will always call and send home an unwell child.
- Telephone the school on 020 8452 4531 at the earliest opportunity to let them know why your child is going to be absent. The office has a prompted answer machine and messages can be left on there.
- Please call daily and keep the school informed if more than one day's absence is necessary.
- If a medical appointment is absolutely necessary, please bring your child to school for the rest of the day.

Here at Childs Hill Primary School we use a 'First Day Calling' system. If your child fails to register or is absent and we have not received a notification a call will be made to you. This only applies for the first day of absence. It is the parent/carers responsibility to call the school each day their child is off and explain the reason why. If a child is absent from school with no explanation offered, it becomes an unauthorised absence.

Punctuality

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils the main playground is supervised from 8.30am when the school gates are opened.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place at 8.50am and pupils who arrive after 9.00am will be recorded as late to school
- Registers close at 9.20am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm in Reception. 1.10pm in Key Stage 1 and 1.20pm in Key Stage 2.
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with through the Attendance Team and may be referred to Education Welfare.
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

Celebration of Attendance and Punctuality

High attendance and punctuality is important to our pupils and because of this is celebrated in many different ways.

Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special assemblies to announce the attendance and punctuality figures for the week. The class(es) with the highest figures have the honour of receiving either the attendance cup or the punctuality cup for the week. • This information is shared with parents on our weekly Friday Flyer which is also shared on the website. • The classes with either 100% attendance and/or punctuality will receive 15 minutes of extra play. • The whole school attendance data is displayed by the Head teachers office.
Termly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of each term, children with 100% attendance are celebrated with a certificate and enter a draw to win a special prize. • Classes with the highest attendance in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 win a prize for their class.
Yearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classes with the highest attendance for the year receive a special certificate. • A prize is also awarded to the class.

Special Leave during Term Time

- Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) regulations 2013, states that schools may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Any absence must be requested and a Special Leave Form can be collected from the office and completed.(Appendix 2)
- Leave is granted if there are exceptional circumstances.(Evidence may be required)
- If leave is taken without authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. A Penalty Notice may be issued.

Penalty Notices

A Fixed Penalty Notice (Appendix 3) is a fine issued by the Local Authority to parents who take their child on holiday, or out of school, during term time without the express consent of the school. Such absences are referred to the Education Welfare Team who may impose a fixed penalty fine of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 per parent for each child if paid within 28 days (Antisocial Behaviour Act 2006/2013). If the notice remains unpaid after the 28th day, the Local Authority prosecutes the parent in the Magistrates' Court for the original non-attendance offence under The Education Act 1996, section 444, and not for non- payment of the penalty notice. If found guilty, parents will have a criminal record, possibly receive a fine of up to £1000, for a first offence, and be

required to pay costs to the Local Authority. There is no right of appeal against a Fixed-Penalty Notice. Absence from school is governed by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, and as amended 2013.