



**Christleton Primary School**  
**Be the best you can be**

**Attendance  
Policy**

Date of Policy	February 2017
Policy Reviewed	
Next Review	February 2018
Signed Head teacher	
Signed Chair of Governors	

# 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

**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.
- For school to be aware of government targets and ensure appropriate use of premium

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

- When their children first start at our school
- Home school contracts
- Through newsletters
- At parent(s)/carer(s) evenings
- In the school prospectus

**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)
- The school's official register is stored on the SIMS.net database
- 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 and given appropriate whole school award.

## **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.

## Completing the Register

- Staff complete class registers at the start of every morning and afternoon session, by 9.05 am and 1.25 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 are brought to the office and checked by the administration staff at 9.10am and 1.25pm.
- 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.**

## Lateness

Pupils who are late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. School begins at 8.55 am for Reception & KS1 pupils and 8.50am for KS2 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 9.15am after this time a child will be coded "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 £60 per parent is payable within 21 days of issue. If unpaid this will increase to £120 to be paid within 28 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 school is currently following the CWAC guidance on this matter and will amend the policy in light of developments that take place over the coming months)**

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

8.50am/8.55am: Doors open, children come in and sit down for registration to be taken

8.50-9.00: Register is taken with any missing child receiving a circle at the time of registration.

Register completed – 9.10: Child enters late. An L is inserted into the circle up to 9.20am.

9.10: Register is closed and taken to the school office.

9.20 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/carer 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.\***

**\*School is awaiting CWAC clarification on this matter. The policy will be amended based on any recommendations it receives.**

### **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.