Policy Number CH12

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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DOCUMENT STATUS

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1. Introduction

1.1 Childwall CE Primary School recognises the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Childwall CE Primary School to support learning and development.

1.2 The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

1.3 To gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%. *As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.*

1.4 Childwall CE Primary School believes teachers, parents, carers and families, pupils and all members of our school community have an important role in improving attendance and punctuality, ensuring children have the opportunity to achieve their potential. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

2. Aims:

2.1 Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality at Childwall CE Primary School.

2.2 Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.

2.3 Provide support, advice and guidance for parents and carers, pupils and staff.

2.4 Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.

2.5 Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.

2.6 Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.

2.7 Enhance partnership between parents/carers and school to ensure children have the highest possible attendance and access to learning.

2.8 Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

3 Promoting regular Attendance at Childwall CE Primary School:

3.1 This is everyone's responsibility - all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils.

3.2 To help us all focus on this, Childwall CE Primary School will ensure:

3.2.1   Appropriate interventions and communication are in place to improve punctuality.

3.2.2   An appropriate, engaging curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.

3.2.3   The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.

3.2.4 Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes Childwall CE Primary School and multi-agency provision as appropriate.

3.2.5 Pupils with special educational needs, disadvantaged and looked after pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.

3.2.6 Effective partnerships with parents/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.

3.2.7 Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact; individual attendance data on parent/carer dashboard on Arbor; termly sharing of attendance certificate; telephone calls and meetings when required.

3.2.8 Good attendance and punctuality is praised and celebrated, with an emphasis on how and why this is so beneficial to the children.

3.2.9 Attendance data is included and celebrated in weekly newsletter.

3.2.10 Staff attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

4 Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

4.1 Expectations of Parent/Carer

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

4.1.1 Endeavour to ensure your child arrives for school on time.

4.1.2 Telephone school if your child is to be late.

4.1.3 For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments, where possible, please ensure they are made outside of school hours.

4.1.4 Contact school preferably by 8.55am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.

4.1.5 If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this message to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.

4.1.6 Contact the class teacher or headteacher if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.

4.1.7 **In case of emergency,** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes, especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided, wherever possible)

4.1.8 Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the headteacher and can only be authorised by the headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays. Absence forms can be requested from the school office.

4.2 **If a pupil is absent we will:**

4.2.1 Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9.45 am.

4.2.2 If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised, a member of school staff may conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible, using other contacts if necessary.

4.2.3 Our attendance assistant records all children absent, day of absence, %attendance, given reason for absence on a Google document, shared and checked daily by the headteacher or, in her absence, other SLT. From this daily check, the HT may instigate specific individual actions.

4.2.4 If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason, the parent/carer will be contacted by the headteacher.

5. Understanding types of Absence

Childwall CE Primary School has to record every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence.

5.1 **Authorised Absence** is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the headteacher, not parents/carers, who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

5.2 **Unauthorised Absence** is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

5.2.1 Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, because siblings are ill

5.2.2 Absences which have not been explained.

5.2.3 Pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

5.2.4 Holidays in term-time

5.2.5 Weddings/ other family celebrations or events
(where an alternative date could have been selected by those organising))

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. This will almost certainly apply in any instance of term-time holiday of 5 days (10 sessions) or longer.
Childwall CE Primary School can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents/carers where their child has accrued 10 sessions (5days) of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school

days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school may refer the case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

5.3 **Persistent Absence**

    5.3.1   Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence, whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.

    5.3.2   Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution. Parent/Carers are asked to contact the class teacher in the first instance.

6   Why Regular Attendance is very important:

6.1 Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning.

6.2 Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

6.3 Pupils who have time off often find it affects friendships and relationships with peers, thus impacting upon enjoyment of school.

6.4 90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week per year.

6.5 Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence, without a good reason, from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

7   The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

7.1 The Education Welfare Officer Service can provide support for parents/carers and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.

7.2 The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists, the EWO will be required to give consideration to the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

8   Leave of Absence in Term Time

8.1 The law does not give any entitlement to parents/carers to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

8.2 Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday or out of school during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

9   Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day they can miss work, and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

9.1 **How we manage lateness:**

9.1.1 The school gates open at 8.40am and we would encourage you to ensure that pupils arrive at school between 8.40 and 8.55am. Registers are taken from 8.55am by the class teacher and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by 9am, after which they are required to enter school through the school office as the main gates are locked. School recommends that pupils arrive by 8.50 am to ensure a calm start to the morning and the opportunity to join in and benefit fully from individualised 'morning work' before lessons start.

9.1.2 Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. Registers close at 9.30am and any child arriving after this time will be marked absent, unless the headteacher agrees an exceptional circumstance. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice as per 'unauthorised absence'.

9.1.3 If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the class teacher who will offer support to resolve the problem.

10. People Responsible for Attendance Matters at Childwall CE Primary School

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

11. Removal from Roll

From the 1st September 2016, changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

11.1.   As a **school** we are now required to:

Inform the LA in *every* circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register.

Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school. Provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

11.2.   If your child is leaving our school, **parents/carers** are asked to:

Give the school office comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Appendices
Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance
Whole School Approach

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	Pupils	• Arrive on school site by 8.55 am • Be in class on time for registration before 9.00 am
	Class Teacher	• Registers are completed each day on time • Ensure attendance has a high profile in class • Discuss absence with pupils returning to school • Discuss any concerns with headteacher • Welcome absentees back into the class
	Pastoral/Admin. Staff	• Ensure staff have completed AM/PM registers • Ensure input of accurate attendance marks in the register via Arbor • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before 9.45am) • Log on Arbor: parental voicemails, text messages and emails regarding student absences • Complete daily attendance table on Google doc. for perusal by headteacher/SLT. • Ensure all late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to Arbor • First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no message/phone call/e-mail has been received. • SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Support staff with registration queries; support the interventions of the class teachers. • Log attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits • Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the First Day contact systems.
	EWO	• Focused casework interventions with persistent absence pupils and families, if commissioned and agreed by headteacher. • Instigation of legal proceedings
	Senior Leader	• Safeguarding home visits as required. • Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with safeguarding requirements. • Phone call contact with parent/carers if concerned about attendance issues. • Liaison with pastoral staff , class teachers and phase leaders regarding support work with identified pupils • Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to school staff

When	Whom	Actions Expected
WEEKLY	**Class teacher**	Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by making contact with parent/carers where appropriate.
	Pastoral/ Admin. Staff	• Discuss with SLT any pupil patterns of absence/lateness. • Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parent/carer, as appropriate. • Weekly Attendance/ PA report sent to senior leader with responsibility for attendance.
	Senior Leader	• Liaison with phase leaders and class teachers regarding support work with identified pupils • Analysis of attendance data – reported and contextualised in school newsletter

When	Whom	Actions Expected
HALF TERMLY	**Headteacher**	• Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement • Use attendance data to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils • Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy • Ensure that attendance features in ALL parents' evenings – attendance certificate shared • Monitor and track attendance/ formulate PA Action Plans

TERMLY	**Headteacher**	The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those at off site provision Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and that systems are operating effectively. Report to SLT & Governors on attendance matters Ensure school website, parent/carers welcome booklet and school newsletters promote attendance

9.0 Table of Escalation of Interventions

Attendance %	RAG	Intervention	Lead Responsibility
100% Attendance is Excellent	(purple)	Acknowledge and Praise	Class Teacher Pastoral Staff Senior Leader
99% - 97% Attendance is Good	(green)	Praise and Encouragement	Class Teacher Pastoral Staff Senior Leader
96% - 90% Attendance is a Concern	(amber)	Talk to pupils & contact parent/carers, where required Safe and well safeguarding visits Persistent absence warning letters	Class Teacher Pastoral Staff Senior Leader
Below 90% Attendance is a Serious Concern	(red)	Regular next action planning meetings Safe and well safeguarding • visits • Action Plans • Legal intervention	Senior Leader Pastoral staff

Individual factors will always be taken into account to inform next steps and interventions at each stage.