



Cherry Orchard Primary Academy Attendance Policy

December 2022

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Revision Log

| Date | Version Number | Brief Detail of change |
|--------------------|----------------|--|
| 19th February 2024 | 1.2 | Paragraph added about Leavers, CME & offrolling Education for Health Needs including Mental Health |
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Introduction

We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils. Our expectation is that all children will attend at least 95% of the time.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

We expect all school personnel to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school. School personnel have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances, it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance as it links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Holidays during term time will not be authorised.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that are connected with this policy.

Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To have in place procedures to prevent absence.

Role of the Principal

The Principal will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals, special educational needs and persistent absentees;

- monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning;
- target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders;
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence;
- remind parents of their commitment to this policy;
- promote the importance of attendance;
- publicise good attendance during assemblies, newsletters
- organise training if required for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance
- strengthen links with external agencies who engage with and support families
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy

Role of the School Admin Staff

The office personnel are responsible for:

- implementing the policy with the Principal;
- monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis;
- keeping the Principal informed of attendance figures and trends;
- contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance;
- organising meetings between the SLT and parents to discuss their child's poor attendance;
- forward to the Principal any applications for a term time holiday;
- compiling attendance data reports for the Principal, the Governing Body and the EWO;
- meet half termly with EWO to conduct monitoring of school attendance
- ensuring registers are kept up to date

Role of the First Day Contact Supervisor

The First Day Contact Supervisor is responsible for:

- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 9.15 am;
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made;
- contacting the key worker if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence;
- if no contact made, alert EWO to make a home visit to assess situation;
- deploying members of staff to visit vulnerable children on their first day of absence if there is a cause for concern
- deploying members of staff to collect a vulnerable child from home if a parent is unable to bring their child to school
- informing the SLT of trends in absence.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with and implement this policy;
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance;
- ensure that registers are taken by 9:15 and are accurate and up to date;
- be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns;
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy;
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents;
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations
- a member of SLT to be present on the playground each morning to greet children into school

Role of Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- complying with this policy;
- ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance;
- informing the school on the first day of absence with the reason before 9:00 am;
- informing the school of any changes to their contact details;
- informing the school if circumstances change - that may impact on their child's attendance - so that appropriate support can be given
- collecting their children on time
- not taking holidays in term time;

Dealing with low attendance

When poor attendance is identified the following actions are taken:

- First [Letter of Concern](#) will be sent when a child's attendance drops below 90%
- Parents are invited to attend an informal meeting with the attendance team
- Support will be given if there are underlying reasons for the absence, e.g. breakfast club offered, 'meet and greets' for vulnerable students or other provision as required
- If persistent absence (PA) continues, a request for [evidence letter](#) will be sent
- Letter sent on behalf of the AWO, if no improvement is made and PA continues [Attendance to meet with AWO letter](#)
- Where persistent absence reaches the threshold we will apply to Kent to issue a fine

Dealing with Lateness

The office personnel monitor lateness and will;

- ensure that children arriving after 9:00 am are recorded as late in the register
- inform the SLT of patterns of lateness;
- inform parents of the school's concerns and arrange a meeting so that the problem can be addressed
- Support offered via Breakfast Club or alternative provision

Absence

Holidays during term time – family holidays during term time will not be [authorised](#). Parents must submit a letter to the Principal explaining the reasons why they are requesting permission to take their child out of school. Leave of absence during term time will only be granted in very exceptional circumstances.

If the leave of absence is taken despite the warning letter, parents are called in for a [meeting](#) with the Attendance Lead and a member of SLT and the relevant year group work folder will be shared, to demonstrate the amount of work that has been missed.

Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments – parents are encouraged, wherever possible, to schedule these appointments outside of school time, in order not to disrupt their child's education.

When a child has had to attend a medical appointment within school hours and then returns to school, they will be marked as 'authorised late' on their return that day with a note detailing the medical appointment. This is to ensure that they are marked as 'present' in the event of a fire or other emergency evacuation. If the child does not return to school after their appointment this will remain 'M' for medical on the register.

Leavers and Children Missing in Education & Removing a Pupil from Roll

The school has a responsibility to safeguard pupils from harm. This includes knowing and taking reasonable steps to check the destinations of leavers. If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to Secondary School, parents are asked to:

- give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving

When pupils leave and parents have not given us the above information, and we cannot contact the parent, then the child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations to try to track and locate the child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

As per The Education Regulations Act 2006 Section 8, when all possible actions have been taken we will remove the student from academy roll due to continued serious absence. Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy within 10 school days, immediately following an authorised leave of absence, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts, we will remove from roll. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy for 20 school days or more and absence is unauthorised, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is,

and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

Education for Health Needs including Mental Health

This guidance relates to local authorities statutory duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996. The section 19(1) duty states that local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable and (normally) full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision.

This means that where a child cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision.

Where possible, the child's health needs should be managed by the home school so that they can continue to be educated there with support, and without the need for the intervention of the local authority. However, as soon as it is clear that the home school can no longer support the child's health needs and provide suitable education, the school should speak to the local authority about putting alternative provision in place.

There is no absolute legal deadline by which local authorities must start to arrange education for children with additional health needs. However, as soon as it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days or more because of their health needs, the local authority should arrange suitable alternative provision. The 15 days may be consecutive or over the course of a school year. Where full-time education would not be in a child's best interests for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, local authorities must arrange part-time education on whatever basis they consider to be in the child's best interests.

Statutory guidance sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 school days or more during the school year, whether consecutive or cumulative. While the section 19 duty sits with the local authority, schools should work closely with them and any relevant medical professionals to ensure that children with health needs are fully supported at school, including putting in place individual healthcare (IHC) plans if appropriate. This may involve, for example, programmes of study that rely on a flexible approach which include agreed periods of remote education.

Local authorities should be aware that under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, a school can only remove the name of a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health

needs from its register in certain circumstances. These include where:

- the pupil has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to
- attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and

- neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the
- school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age