



CHURCH COWLEY ST. JAMES C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Attendance Policy

Church Cowley St James C of E Primary School adopted the attached model policy at the Full Governing Body Meeting of 23rd April 2019. It is a school policy.

The Attendance Policy was produced by the school. The Governing Body will review this policy every two years.

Reviewed: April 2019

Approved: 23rd April 2019

Signed:  Chair of Governors

Next Review: April 2021



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Aims

To provide clear guidelines about how East Oxford Partnership schools (which includes our school) promote and attain high levels of pupil attendance. This will ensure that all stakeholders understand the schools' expectations of themselves, and each other, and strive to attain these expectations.

To promote the value of a positive attitude to school as a place of learning and personal development.

Objectives

1. To develop a 97% + attendance rate
2. To promote partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
3. To ensure good progress for all children
4. To encourage a positive attitude to punctuality and attendance
5. To restrict days taken as holiday during term time
6. To involve other agencies when all possible school-based supportive measures have been put into place

The policy will give clear guidance on expectations and procedures for the following personnel:

- Pupils
- Parents/carers
- Staff
- Governors

Procedures for implementation

Expectations of parents:

- That they will ensure their child/ren attend school, aiming for 97-100% attendance rate
- That they will contact school as soon as it is reasonably practical (preferably before 9am) whenever their child is unable to attend
- That any absence is followed by a written or spoken explanation of why the child was absent and for what period of time if it is more than one day
- That they make sure that their child/ren arrive in school on time, well prepared for the school day
- That they will contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school or contribute to lateness
- That they will try to make doctor and dentist appointments out of school hours and if that is not possible to bring their child to school before and/or after the appointment
- That they will not take their children out of school for holidays, or occasional days, unless there are significant and exceptional circumstances
- That they will ensure that family contact numbers are up-to-date

Expectations of pupils:

- That they will attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate of 97-100%
- That they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may hinder them from attending school

Expectations of school:

- To provide clear leads on attendance through the Assistant Head teacher (Inclusion) and Home School Link Worker (HSLW)
- To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence/absence
- To make early contact with parents when a child fails to attend
- To refer to appropriate support agencies as required
- To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance
- To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted
- To inform all families of the child/ren's attendance figures at least once per year and to make them available upon request

Expectations of governors:

- To monitor the effectiveness of the policy through Head Teacher/Assistant Head Teacher (Inclusion) reports
- To support the school in encouraging good attendance through role modelling in the case of parent governors
- To attend celebration assemblies for good attendance

School procedures related to attendance**Registration**

- Registration periods are 8:50 – 9:00am (years 1 to 6) and 8:55 – 9:10am (Early Years and Foundation Stage), and 12:45 – 1:00pm (EYFS and KS1) and 1:00 – 1:15pm (KS2). Registers will be completed and sent to the office at the end of registration time
- Registers will be completed using the codes identified in Appendix 3
- If no information regarding the absence of a child has been received by 9:30am, the school office will telephone the parents/carers to check the reason for absence.
- If there is no initial reason given for the absence either verbal or written, or a letter of explanation on the child's return, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Head Teacher, or delegated to a member of the attendance team and will be in accordance with statutory requirements and the school's policy on attendance

Authorised absence

- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from the parents that the child is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence and a note or verbal explanation on the child's return, if the absence is longer than one day.
- If the child has a medical appointment with the doctor or the dentist that cannot be made outside school hours, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Where possible, other siblings should remain in school. Schools would expect children to return from appointments as soon as possible. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents. Parents must inform the school in advance.
- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the school procedures then this will be an authorised absence.
- An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents give a reason, if the absences are persistent. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request confirmation from the GP and/or the school nurse that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

Persistent lateness

If a child arrives after registration has begun, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If lateness is persistent and parents/carers fail to work with the school to address the issues, the matter can be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Service, who will offer support. If there is still no improvement, the Service could issue a fine.

Holiday absence

Since September 2013, there is no longer any entitlement to holiday absence.

- Requests for absence for holidays during term time will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances and will be authorised only on very rare occasions. Parents/carers will be expected to write a letter outlining their particular circumstances and to arrange to meet with the Head Teacher.
- Previous attendance through the year will be taken into consideration
- If a holiday request is refused by the school, but the child is still taken on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the matter may be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Service who can issue a penalty fine.
- Children may be taken off roll after 20 days from the start of the absence, with the agreement of the Attendance Team, and any time off after 10 days would be unauthorised.

Response to non-attendance

- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents/carers, the parents/carers will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone or text. If no contact can be made through work or mobile numbers, the school will use the contacts list provided by parents.
- Where there has been no response, or explanation, the school will send a letter to the parents/carers requesting information regarding the absence
- Where there continues to be no response to the school intervention, and the absence has persisted without explanation, the school will request a visit to the home by a Home School Community Link Worker if possible or refer the issue to an Attendance and Engagement Officer.
- If a child's attendance slips below 85%, the school will initially write to parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the Head Teacher or a member of the Attendance Team will invite the parents/carers in to discuss the issue and set up a formal attendance contract. If the problem persists, the family will be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Service.
- If a child is repeatedly late, the school will initially write to parents/carers expressing concerns about late arrival and offering support if required. If the situation does not improve, the Head Teacher or a member of the Attendance Team will invite the parents/carers in to discuss the issue and set up a formal attendance contract. If the problem persists, the family will be referred to the Attendance and Engagement Service
- In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between the school and parents/carers, with the support of the Attendance and Engagement Officer, the school will refer the matter formally to the Attendance and Engagement Service and, if necessary, legal proceedings will be started.

Incentives for good attendance

- Attendance data will be checked termly (6 times per year) by the Attendance Team to report back to the Senior Leadership Team.
- Attendance will be discussed regularly at staff meetings where staff have the opportunity to express any concerns
- Certificates for 97%+ attendance and 100% attendance will be awarded at least three times per year with an additional certificate for the whole year at the end of term 6
- A certificate for improved attendance for targeted individuals will be given as appropriate
- Tangible rewards will be given for individuals and groups of children with 97%+ attendance
- Reasons for regular attendance and arriving on time well prepared for school will be raised in assemblies and Personal Social Health Citizenship Education (PSHCE) sessions
- Parents/carers will receive information on their child's attendance at Parent Consultation Meetings throughout the year

Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness

- The school Attendance Team will analyse attendance at the end of each term to identify issues and trends.
- The school will work closely with Attendance and Engagement Service in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the school
- The school will evaluate the success of the procedures by measuring the attendance rate against the target throughout the year
- The Head Teacher/Assistant Head Teacher (Inclusion) will report to governors three times per year on the progress of and key issues surrounding attendance

Summary

Through the implementation of the policy, the following will be achieved:

- A 97%+ attendance rate
- A positive partnership between parents/carers and the school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
- Clear and transparent procedures and expectations understood by everyone at Church Cowley St James C of E Primary School, one of the East Oxford Partnership of schools.

To be reviewed by Church Cowley St James C of E Primary School every 2 years