CHAUCER COMMUNITY Primary School



ATTENDANCE POLICY

2021-2022

­Review Date September 2022

ATTENDANCE POLICY

At Chaucer Primary School we recognize that attending school regularly has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life opportunities and chances for children. We will encourage good attendance for all pupils, by offering an environment in which pupils feel valued and part of the school community.

Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that all school should have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance which should be set out in an attendance policy.

CHAUCER COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AIMS TO:

* Achieve 96% in attendance

* Improve the overall percentage attendance of pupils at school

* To make attendance and punctuality a priority for those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.

* To develop a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

* To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.

* To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analyzing attendance related data.

* To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.

* To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.

* To promote effective partnership with the Pupil Attendance Support Team and with other support services and agencies.

* To recognize the need of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following a significant period of absence.

* To promote attendance through PSHE and assemblies.

**ATTENDANCE MISSION STATEMENT**

Chaucer Community Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the

efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives, Chaucer Community Primary School will endeavour to establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

We believe that if children are to make the most of the opportunities offered at school it is necessary for them to attend regularly and punctually.

It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to ensure that their children are regular and punctual attendees and to:

* To contact school on the 1st day of absence no later than 9:15am
* Keep all contact numbers up to date
* Provide the school with a written and signed absence note on the day of their child’s return to school
* Attend meetings in school
* Provide proof of medical appointments, if the reason for absence is given as illness
* Avoid any leave in term time – this includes any holidays which should be discussed with the school prior to the holiday being booked, as if it does not meet the criteria, it may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice
* Participate on Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and cooperate in support and interventions offered by school or other agencies.

It is the responsibility of pupils to:

* Attend school and be on time
* Talk to parent/Carer/teacher or other trusted adult if issues arise that may have an effect on school attendance

It is the responsibility of the school to encourage good habits of attendance and punctuality by:

* Staff setting good personal examples
* Adopting a positive attitude to children who are regular and punctual attendees
* Monitoring attendance by completion of registers
* Initiate the use of first day response call when children are not in school in time for registration
* Following up absences with requests for letters of explanation from parents
* Following up unexplained lateness
* Not blaming children for non-attendance and/or lateness when the responsibility lies with parents / carers
* Involving parents/carers in meetings
* Involving the Pupil Attendance Support Team when appropriate
* Referrals to Children Missing in Education when appropriate

**Children Missing from Education** can be a potential sign of abuse or neglect including

sexual exploitation, undergoing female genital mutilation, forced marriage or travelling to conflict zones.

* ALL staff and volunteers follow school procedures when a child misses education particularly on repeat occasions to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect
* The school **Attendance Policy**is up to date, reviewed annually and includes reference to CME 2
* There is an admissions policy and an attendance register
* The Local Authority is informed of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the schools permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more
* Work alongside other multi-agencies Statutory and Non Statutory in respect of individual children and families.
* Involving the Court Office when appropriate re: possible Fixed Penalty Notice

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice

Penalty notices are fines that can be issued to parents by the Local Authority for their child’s irregular school attendance. They can be issued in cases of leave taken during term time, without school’s permission or delays in returning to school from a period of authorised leave.

The notice will state the fine payable and the timescales for doing so. The charge is £120 per parent, per child and is payable within 28 days (The fine is payable at a reduced rate of £60, if paid within 21 days). All payments are made to the Local Authority.

Penalty notices provide an alternative to prosecution and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for an offence by paying the penalty.

When can a penalty notice be issued?

Parents of a registered pupil whose child fails to attend school regularly are committing and offence under section 444(1) Education Act 1996

A pupil must have had a minimum of 5 school days (10 sessions) lost to unauthorised absence during the current term or 10 school days (20 sessions) in 2 consecutive terms before a Penalty Notice is considered.

Penalty Notices can be issued where with the governing body approval; the school attendance policy contains reference to the school’s use of PN’s with regards to unauthorised absences and unauthorised holidays.

Penalty notices can be issued where parents have been given an opportunity to improve their child’s attendance but failed to do so.

Penalty notices can be issued in cases of leave taken during term time without school permission or delayed return from a period of authorized leave without prior school permission.

Registration

Registers should be completed at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions.

Morning Registration is at 8.40am for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

Morning Registration is 8,45am for Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6.

Children who are absent at the time of the register being taken must be left blank. The registers are sent to the office immediately after completion. Pupils entering the school after the pupil gates have closed will sign in at the office. Any children missing will be investigated by a First Day Response call, and the appropriate mark recorded onto the register.

Children arriving after the gates close at 9.00am will be marked as late (L). A child arriving after the register has been officially closed at 9.15am will be marked as late without authorisation. (U).

The school office is responsible for entering attendance on the electronic register and for inputting absence codes on a daily/weekly basis.

First Day Response Call

It is the school’s intention to implement a “first day response call” when children are not in school in time for registration.   If no contact is made with the parent to ascertain the reason for a child not being in school, where possible a message will be left, asking the parent to contact school with a reason for the absence. Where there are reasonable grounds to consider safeguarding/child protection concerns for a pupil a home visit will be undertaken by the DSL’s or the schools attendance lead.

**Telephoned Absence Information**

Pupil absence should be telephoned into school on the first day of the absence and a reason for the absence left on the dedicated absence line. You can also email school at admin@chaucer.lancs.sch.uk or send an absence message through Parent App. If the absence is likely to last for more than 1 day, the school office should be regularly informed and updated of the continued absence.

Absence Letters

All absences should be explained in writing from the child’s parent/carer. Absence notes should be sent to the office where they will be retained in a file. Letters are sent out weekly to parents/carers where a reason for absence has not been received, if no satisfactory response is received after two weeks of the date of absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised. The reason for absence should be linked directly to the pupil (e.g. illness or medical appointment of/for the child). Reasons for absence relating to parents or siblings may not be authorised.

**Late Registration**

Pupils who are late and requiring admittance to school must enter via the main entrance. For Health and Safety reasons parents **MUST** accompany late arriving pupils into the building in order to sign their children into school, and provide a reason for the late arrival.

Before registers close pupils will be given a late mark (L) in the register, this is classed as a present mark, but displays that the pupil arrived late for school. Any pupil who arrives after the registers have closed, but before the end of the session will be given a ‘late after registers closed’ mark (U) in the register. This code is classed as an unauthorised absence but displays that the pupil was physically present in school for part of the session.

The fact the U code is classed as an unauthorised absence means that when it is used pupils are likely to be missing significant amounts of schooling; putting their educational progress at risk. Unauthorised absence can attract the interest of external agencies, including referral to the local authority attendance team and consideration of the use of legal measures, in just the same way.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The decision to authorise or unauthorise an absence is based on the information provided by parents/carers. However, as the register is a legal document it has to be completed in accordance with the current legislation. Therefore there may be occasions when it will be necessary for parents to provide evidence or reasons for absence before authorisation is granted.

Examples of authorised absence

* Medical or dental appointments, which relate directly to the pupil and unavoidably fall during the school day (evidence may be required prior to authorisation)
* Illness of the pupil (evidence may be required prior to authorisation)
* Leave which has been authorised by the Head teacher due to exceptional circumstances.

Examples of unauthorised absence

* Parents/Carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Children who arrive at school after the registers have closed
* Looking after other children, shopping and birthdays
* Day trips and leave during term time which has not been agreed
* Days that exceed the amount agreed by the Head teacher

Signing out

Parent/Carers are responsible for signing out children from the school, where leave has been granted during the school day or for medical/dental appointments.

Children can only be released to a parent or authorised carer/family member when being collected from school. When a child leaves the school site after registration, the original mark will remain in the register, but the signing in/out procedure will be referred to during an evacuation situation to ensure all pupils can be accounted for.

Leave of Absence

Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools cannot authorise any leave other than in exceptional circumstances. In Chaucer Primary School the head teacher is the person authorised by the Governing body, to make this decision. If the leave is being requested for a holiday, approval should be obtained prior to making any bookings.

Leave of absence **SHALL NOT**be granted unless:

* A request for leave has been made in advance, by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and
* The head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**relating to the request.

Equal Opportunities

The school will take into account cultural, social and educational factors when implementing this policy.  Every attempt will be made to ensure that no child or family will be treated unfairly because of underlying cultural, social or educational factors.

Parents are informed of the School’s Attendance Policy.