

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

At Chesterton Primary School the Local Academy Committee makes arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is only by attending school regularly and punctually that children can take advantage of the educational opportunities that are available to them. Statistical evidence indicates that those children who do not attend school on a regular basis do not make the same level of progress as those children who do.

Legislation Framework

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child). This policy has been drawn up based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations.

The School will:

- **Regularly monitor attendance** – this includes having an up to date attendance policy that is in line with KCSIE. Whole school attendance as well as key groups will be monitored, attendance data analysed and support put in place as necessary. We will build strong relationships with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them. We will share information and work collaboratively with other external agencies.
- **Safeguard and promote the welfare of children**- The school will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who is persistently absent from education.
- **Keep admissions registers up to date and accurate**- this includes ensuring that contact details are all accurate and up to date. The school will inform the LA within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admissions register. The school must also inform the LA of any pupil whose name will be deleted from the admission register. The school and LA must have made reasonable enquires to establish a child's whereabouts before they can be removed from the school role.
- **Undertake reasonable enquires to establish the whereabouts of possible CME**
- **Comply with the School Admissions Code**- allocating and offering places in an open, timely and fair way.

Parents' / carers' responsibilities

It is expected that parents / carers will:

- Ensure their children attend the school regularly
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum
- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.
- Notify Chesterton Primary School on the first day of absence by reporting to the school office.
- Ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day.

Recording Attendance

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff, including temporary and supply staff are trained so that the registers are taken accurately. The register will be called promptly at **8:55am** and at **12:30pm** for Nursery, **1.15pm** for Reception and Year 1, **1.30pm** for Years 2-4 and **1:45pm** for Years 5-6.

The registers will close at **9.00am** and **1.30/ 1:50pm**. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will be marked as **absent**. Any child arriving late but before the closing of the register will be marked as **late**. Any pupil arriving late must sign in when they arrive at the office. The admin staff then register these pupils as late.

Categorising Absence (see appendix 1)

After registers are closed any child who is not present will be marked as unauthorised absence **unless** leave has been granted by the school **in advance** or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Chesterton Primary School will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**. If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 2 weeks**, the absence will remain unauthorised.

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- Where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend.
- Where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example, a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority.
- A pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered.
- Where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand)
- Where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's / student's parents belong.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:

- No explanation has been given by the parent.
- The school is not satisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday.
- The pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission.

Collecting Attendance Data

The Headteacher will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the Local Academy Committee. The report will include commentary on the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance. **Attendance is monitored by year group, gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.** Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE (via the Local Authority) within the stipulated time frame.

Absence is managed in the following ways:

- Chesterton Primary School has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents/ carers will be telephoned on the first day if a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence.

This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge.

- Parents need to contact the school each day a child is absent, if they do not then the school will contact them. If they cannot be contacted after 3 days then we will undertake a home visit.
- Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit.
- If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), and if attendance falls to 90% or less the matter the family will be invited to a half termly school attendance panel (SAP) meeting with the Headteacher. A parenting contract will be put in place with clear targets and support to help improve attendance (see appendix 2). External professionals will be invited as appropriate e.g. school nurse, social worker, early help worker etc.

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. If a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will make contact with his/her parents immediately.

Rewarding consistent levels of attendance

Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

Individual rewards

- Half termly attendance certificates and rewards for 100% attendance – pencil (Autumn 1) / pen (Autumn 2)/ notebook (Spring 1) / wristband (Spring 2) / bookmark (Summer 1)/ Pencil case (Summer 2)
- A badge will be given each term to children who have 100% attendance each term.
- Termly trip for 99%+ attendance (learning mentors to lead)
- Termly progress certificates for children who have significantly improved their attendance.

Class rewards

- Daily conversation with class around the number of children in class each day – celebrating high levels of attendance
- Weekly certificate for class with highest attendance – 10 mins additional playtime/ certificate and class cup
- Best class attendance termly in school reward e.g. park, forest school (learning mentors to lead with class teacher)

Families

- The school will inform families of their child's attendance each half term
- Celebrating improved attendance with families (through letters)

Other parental interventions offered by the LA

Borough Attendance Panel (BAP)- for ongoing poor attendance the school will refer the family to the BAP.

Parenting Order- this can only be used as an ancillary order imposed by the Court following prosecution for non-attendance.

Education Supervision Order (ESO)- An ESO puts a child who is not being properly educated under the supervision of the LA to ensure they receive a suitable full-time education. This is usually for 1 year but can be extended and will be reviewed every 3 months.

School Attendance Order- put in place for children missing in education.

Holidays in Term Time

All applications will be considered individually. The school policy is **NOT** to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances.

Chesterton Primary School will consider authorising holidays for:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

Requests for holidays for the following reason will not be authorised:

- Cheaper cost of holiday
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Holidays will not be authorised during periods of national tests e.g. SATS

Penalty Notices (PNs) for Non-Attendance- will be issued for term time absence due to holidays (G-code) or ongoing persistent absence as a child must regularly attend the school where they are registered. This is for children who are of statutory school age (term after a child turns 5 years old). The penalty is £80 per person per child to avoid prosecution. There is no right to appeal by parents against a penalty notice. PNs can only be issued by the LA. Referrals should be made online <https://forms.office.com/e/QaPbhi9ndY>

Emotionally Based School Attendance (EBSA)

The DSL, Headteacher and attendance lead will monitor against key risk factors (including social isolation, mental health difficulties, young carers, experience of bullying, siblings with attendance issues and neurodevelopmental needs) and patterns for children who are at risk of EBSA. Guidance taken from the WHHTS EBSA Guidance and Toolkit.

Severe Persistent Absence

Children whose attendance falls below 50% are classified as having severe persistent absence. These families will be referred to social care via a MASH form. This is inline with the current guidance from KCSIE.

Children Missing from Education (see safeguarding policy)

Children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving a suitable education.

Policy Sign off

	Reviewer	Date	Approver	Date
Reviewer / approver	Danine Smith	November 2024	LAC	20.11.2024
	Next Review			November 2025

Appendix 1

The following codes are used in the Arbor system when marking a register:

The DfE introduced the new attendance codes as of the 19th August 2024.

Colour Key

Colour	Description
	Present
	Authorised Absence
	Approved Educational Activity - Counted as Present
	Unauthorised Absence
	Not Counted in Attendance Calculations

Attendance codes

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience

K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided
O	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description
U	Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed
D	Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance
X	Not required to be in school - for non-compulsory school age children
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances
#	Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Appendix 2

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PANEL Meeting Record

Name of Child	
Year Group	
Meeting Date	

Notes from previous meeting, dated: _____

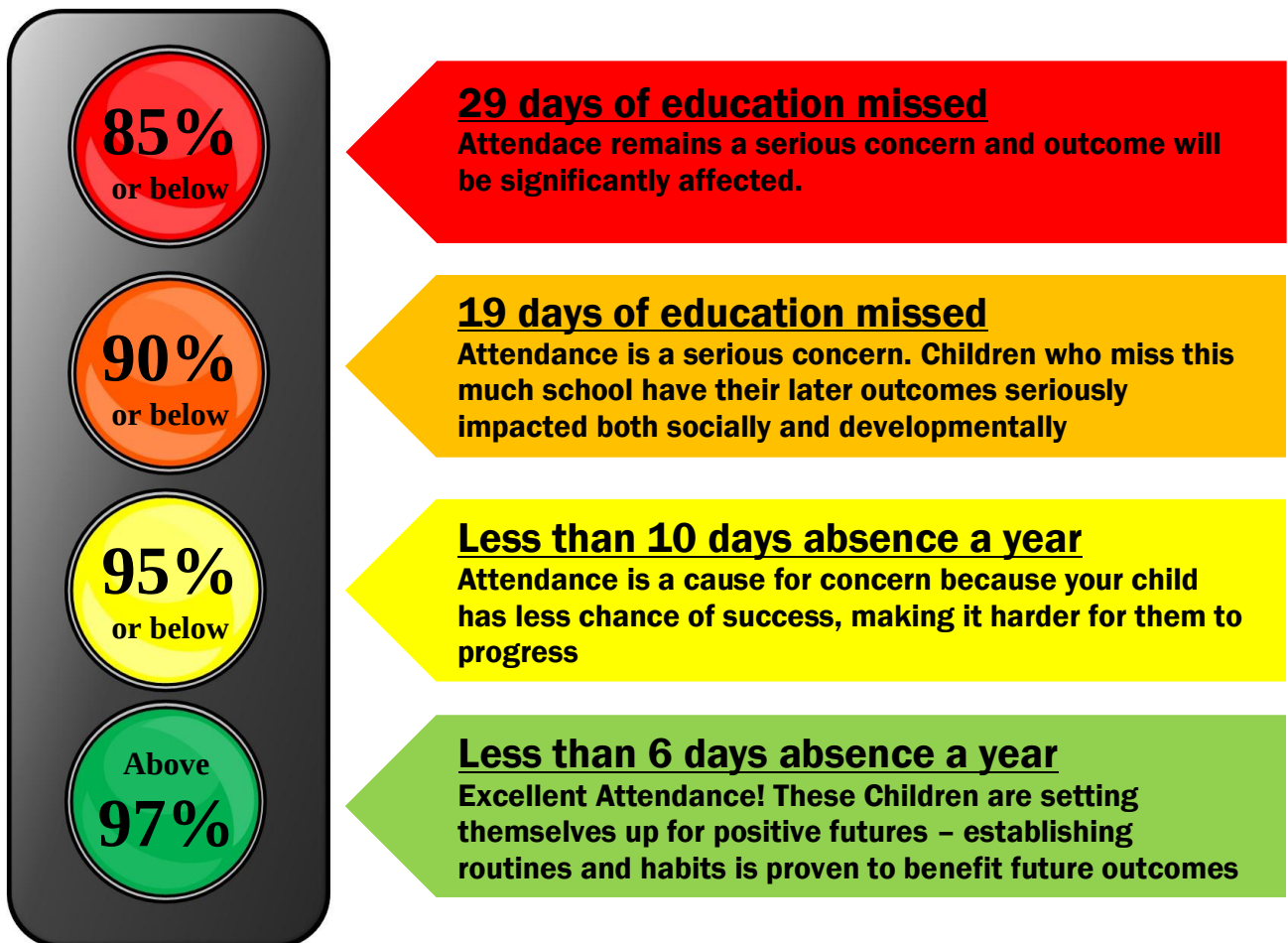
Attendance & Punctuality (including authorised & unauthorised absences)		
A1:	Sp1:	Su1:
A2:	Sp2:	Su2:

Please see attached sheet for reasons given for absences.

Discussion notes – what are the barriers to your child attending school?

	Targets	How will we achieve this? What do we need to do?
1		
2		
3		

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
Headteacher Parent



How can you help?

- Children flourish with consistent routines, so setting them at home, with your child, can really help.
- If your child is sick, call the school.
- If you have any concerns or worries, speak to a member of school staff – we are here to help.

