



Chantry Community Primary School

Attendance Policy

October 2015

This policy reflects the vision and aims of **Chantry Community Primary School**:

As a school we wish to adopt approaches which:

- demonstrate a strong attendance ethos
- show a consistent policy on absence
- adopt good systems for monitoring attendance
- use attendance data to improve school and pupil performance
- intervene early when pupil absence gives cause for concern
- offer support for vulnerable pupils
- reward and celebrate good and improved attendance

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- ***parents keeping children off school unnecessarily***
- ***truancy before or during the school day***
- ***absences which have never been properly explained***
- ***children who arrive at school too late to get a mark***
- ***holidays during term time***

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service. The service will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Registers are taken at 8.45am, any children arriving after this time should enter school via the main entrance and sign the 'late book'. If children are regularly late this will be discussed with the parent/carer by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Parents/carers are requested to contact the school by 9.30am if their child is not going to be in school that day, stating the reason for the absence. If no contact is made by the parents and the school is unaware of the child's absence the office staff will try and make contact with the parents to establish a reason for the absence.

Absence forms should be completed by parents/carers for planned absences i.e. holidays or other exceptional circumstances and an appointment made with the Headteacher to discuss the absence.

The school is only able to authorise absences in exceptional circumstances. The Department of Education produce guidelines on what is not exceptional circumstances. It is for the Headteacher to determine the number of days a child can be away from school *if* the leave is granted.

In the case of an unauthorised absence the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice will be issued. Please note that Penalty Notices are issued to *each* parent for *each* child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days.

The school has adopted the following attendance target

97% Attendance Target

Parents of children whose attendance drops below 95% will receive an amber warning letter. If attendance drops below 90% a red warning letter will be sent. Regular lateness or poor attendance will be followed up by the Headteacher.

Termly stickers are given to children who have 100% attendance three times a year. 100% Attendance Certificates are given out at the end of the year.

Children Missing Education (CME)

If we suspect a child is 'missing' where there are already child protection concerns, the school will inform the relevant social service duty team immediately, as well as the Children Missing Education Officer.

For pupils that have left our school completely and where we have been unable to establish the educational provision that the pupil is attending, or where a pupil has been missing for 20 school days or more, we will complete the online CME Referral Form.

Before making a referral, we will efforts to locate the pupil using the [CME Checklist](#) (Word, 54KB) before making a referral. We are required to demonstrate what actions we have taken as part of the referral process.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Date:

Headteacher Signature:

Chair of Governors Signature: