

CHURCHFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHURCHFIELDS ROAD BECKENHAM, KENT, BR3 4QY



ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Churchfields Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

A high level of school attendance is vital to children making (and sustaining) stable friendships and achieving well. We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity is used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

This school attendance policy is written to reflect both the statutory position and best practice guidance produced by the DfE. This policy outlines the procedures that the school uses to maximize pupils' attendance.

Each year the school will review its attendance policy and procedures in light of attendance figures for the preceding year.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

We hold half termly attendance reviews and meet with parents where attendance is below 90%. At these meetings we agree targets for the following half term and review after an agreed period. If necessary, we refer cases to Education Welfare for further action.

In addition to focusing on pupils whose attendance is very low (below 90%) we also write to all parents of children whose attendance is in the 90-95% band encouraging them to ensure that their child's attendance reaches 95%.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:50 am in KS 1 & 2 and 8:55pm for pupils in Reception. The registers remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorized absence code is entered.

The afternoon registration is at 1:15pm in KS1 and Reception and at 1:25 in KS2

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to inform the school of any absence and the reason for it by ringing the school. The school office is staffed from 8:00 am until 5:00pm and there is an answerphone service outside of these hours. In the event of a child being absent from school without any contact or explanation the school will ring the parent/carer to check the whereabouts of the child in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. This information is then used to amend/update our school registers by the school's admin officer.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Family Worker to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Absence in term time

Absence during term time is strongly discouraged. Parents/carers are reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider authorising absence only where

- A Parents/carers can demonstrate exceptional circumstances, and;
- B Children's attendance is 95% or better.

In this instance exceptional circumstances will be interpreted as being unique, one off events and of significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time. The headteacher will make the decision about whether exceptional circumstances have been effectively demonstrated. Applications for holidays without additional exceptional circumstances will not be granted. Neither will applications made for children whose attendance is below 95%. The maximum period of

absence during term time that we will authorize is 5 days within one academic year. Any absence during term time longer than 5 days will be coded as unauthorised.

Parents/carers must apply in advance using the form available from the school office. Any holiday taken during term time without seeking prior approval will be recorded as unauthorized absence and may be subject to further investigation by the EWO.

Promoting attendance

We seek to improve attendance and punctuality through promotion of good habits and by stressing the link between good attendance, emotional wellbeing and high achievement. To encourage this we offer a range of rewards and incentives. The Home/School agreement is used to remind parents/carers of their responsibility and to promote good attendance and punctuality. The school also uses opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

We reward pupils with the best attendance and those who have significantly improved their attendance with certificates and prizes at the end of the academic year.

We also have a weekly attendance prize for the class with the best attendance which will be awarded in the Friday Star Pupil Assembly. The three classes with the best attendance will be mentioned in the weekly newsletter. We also celebrate the classes with the best cumulative attendance over half a term in the newsletter.

The registration system

The School uses SIMs for keeping the school attendance records. Registers are completed electronically directly from classrooms and are saved to the school server. Where there are technical difficulties paper registers will be completed as back up. Copies of the electronic registers will be printed out daily at 9:30 am to be used in the event of emergency evacuation of the building (eg fire drill etc).

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity

E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

School Attendance - Guidance for maintained schools, academies , independent schools and local authorities September 2018

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration