

Attendance Policy

At Chad Vale Primary School we follow:

- Birmingham City Council's Guidelines on attendance.
- The policies and procedures from Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) which includes the Government's Prevent strategy.

Policy Written by:	Vickie Crombie
School adoption date:	September 2017
School's review date:	September 2019

RATIONALE

Chad Vale Primary School bases its Attendance Policy on the guidelines as set out by the Birmingham **Local Authority**. Frequent absence and lateness can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage a child.

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

Pupils should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Pupils may sometimes be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, parents / carers and the pupil. If a pupil 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, is not important and may make things worse

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To promote good pupil attendance which is vital to educational achievement.

- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.
- To convey clearly to parents and children that regular attendance is essential; unauthorised absence and persistent lateness is not acceptable; parental condoned, unjustifiable absence will be investigated and may be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- To monitor and support pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents / carers to resolve any difficulties.
- To promote and reward regular school attendance at whole school, class and individual level.
- To safeguard children when they are absent from school.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The school governors along with the Head Teacher will at the beginning of each school year set an attendance target for the school. This year our target is 97%. The school governors are also responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy and for ensuring that pupil's names are recorded on the school admissions and daily register.

The Head Teacher has a responsibility to ensure that the daily register of pupils attending the school is taken and delegates the monitoring and reporting on attendance to a senior member of staff. The Head Teacher and SLT will enforce the law regarding school attendance, taking necessary court action as required.

Office Staff will prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of Attendance in SIMS. They will record name of pupils who arrive late each day using the school Inventory system. They will also record messages received from parents regarding children's absence and make contact with parents when children are not in school. This will happen before 10am.

Parents have a responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly.

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents meet this responsibility and the service can seek legal redress to secure a pupil's attendance if a parent fails in their duty.

Chad Vale Primary School will make its policy on attendance clear to parents and children through:

- Admissions procedures
- The prominence of our attendance policy
- The use of standardised letters to parents addressing specific aspects of attendance and requiring parental response, parent and children interview in the case of repeated, unexplained absences
- Clear systems and procedures will govern responses to all absence
- A reward system will give prominence to the acknowledgement of good and improving attendance by children at Chad Vale Primary School
- Chad Vale Primary School will be alert and responsive to the range of factors that can affect attendance

- The main factors affecting attendance of children at Chad Vale Primary School are: illness; medical appointments, religious observance and unauthorised leave during term time

MANAGING AND MONITORING PUPIL ABSENCE

At Chad Vale Primary School the attendance of pupils is recorded electronically. This helps us to produce termly data which we use to track and monitor attendance of our pupils. It also helps the school provide information on pupil attendance for Ofsted inspectors.

Each reason for pupil absence has a special code and this assists the school to monitor persistent absentees. In our school we expect pupils to have 100% attendance. Parents of pupils attending this school have a responsibility to make sure their children are as close as possible to reaching this. Children's attendance patterns are monitored on a half termly basis by the attendance lead and any patterns, issues or significant absence will be further investigated. Parents of children with below 90% attendance will be contacted either by telephone or letter. Parents may also be invited to school to meet with Senior Teachers or our attendance lead. All children whose attendance is poor will be

The Local Authority has statutory powers to issue Penalty Notices which may lead to prosecution. Each year the school will run a 'Spotlight on Attendance' campaign with the support of the court section of the Education Welfare Service. Letters about the process are sent to parents in the first Parents' Evening of the academic year. If attendance does not improve after meetings with parents, the court section of the Education Welfare Service will issue Penalty Notices. In the case of fines not being paid, this may lead to prosecution.

RAISING ATTENDANCE

In order to encourage and reward regular attendance at school we celebrate with termly badges for children who have managed to achieve 100% attendance in each term. Attendance and late figures are published weekly in the school newsletter and the class with the highest attendance % for the week is announced in our weekly celebration assembly. They are also given an attendance trophy to display in their classroom for the week. Children who have been identified as close to, or below, the 90% attendance threshold will receive reward certificates and letters home if their attendance improves and continues to do so over a half termly period.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL (appendix 1 for school response flowchart)

Any absence will prompt a first day contact. Systems are in place for the recording of absence via registers, which fulfil statutory requirements and enable Chad Vale Primary School to monitor and evaluate attendance effectively.

As part of our duty to safeguard children, any absence without informing the school will result in a phone call from the school and a home visit if no response is received. School attendance is a very serious matter and we aim to have good communication about attendance matters with parents through our newsletter, structured conversations and annual reviews. If there is a problem it is better if a parent speaks with a member of staff rather than allow a situation to escalate.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

At Chad Vale Primary School we have an expectation that parents will telephone the school to inform us of their child's absence. We may not accept a parent's reason for absence especially if the child's attendance is below 95% and may require further evidence of illness or medical support. Regular unauthorised absences where a parent has not provided a reason for absence mean that a parent or parents may be breaking the law and could be:

- issued with an Education penalty charge notice of £60 - £120 by the local authority
- found guilty in a magistrates court and fined up to £2,500

Regular Pupil Illness

If a child is regularly absent due to sickness a parent may be invited to school to discuss their child's absences, this discussion may include the school nurse, or referral to the school nurse. When a child is regularly absent due to illness the school will request that a parent provides medical details from their doctor before continuing to authorise further absences.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Our school actively discourages parents making requests to take their children out of school during term time. The school is closed for 13 weeks of the year and parents are expected to use this time for taking holidays and visiting family abroad.

We have a request form that a parent in **exceptional circumstances** may complete and return to the Head Teacher for consideration. Families who take their children out of school for unauthorised leave during term time, risk receiving a Formal Warning, or Education Penalty Notice. Chad Vale Primary School has the full support of our Governing Body and the local authority in this matter.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE/ HOLIDAYS

Parents may request an absence from school for their child on the day of the religious festival, so that children can enjoy celebrations with their families. The school is unable to sanction leave of absence for longer than one day. Parents taking children out for more than one day will have the absence recorded as unauthorised.

PUNCTUALITY

The register is taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Pupils arriving after the 9 am bell are required to sign in via the Inentry system in the main entrance. This will record as a late mark on the register and will also record number of minutes after the bell that the pupil arrives in school.

Pupils who arrive after 9:15 am will be marked with a U code on the register which is an unauthorised absence.

Children should be collected from school at 3:30pm. If a parent is going to be late collecting their child they should ring the school office. Any parent who regularly collects their child late will be invited to meet with the Head Teacher. In very serious cases of children being

left late at school the child may be deemed to be abandoned with the local police station being informed.

DENTAL AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Wherever possible, parents should make every effort to avoid making medical or dental appointments during the school day. It is preferable to try and arrange these during holiday periods or at the beginning, or end, of the school day. Medical appointments should not normally result in a whole day's absence from school. It is a parent's responsibility to collect their child from school to take them to appointments and to bring them back to school once their appointment is over.

SCHOOL GOVERNORS

The Head Teacher has a responsibility to report on attendance issues at every full meeting of the Governing Body. One of the school governors responsibilities is making sure that each pupil's details are recorded, including address and telephone number, these are very important in case of an emergency. Parents should always ensure that school has their current contact details.

Our Governors support the Head Teacher in managing requests for pupil leave of absence and take the position that families have "no right" to such leave. Our Chair of Governors can be contacted via the school office.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Our school must be able to demonstrate that it knows the whereabouts of each child and any reasons for their absence. It is very important for the local authority to be able to track children if they are not attending school and in some cases for schools to make a referral to Social Care. If a child attending Chad Vale is moving to a new address please keep the school office informed with updates in contact details and address. If your child will be leaving us you must inform us in writing that you will no longer require a place for your child, the date that they will be leaving and the name of the new school that your child will be attending. If you do not have this information at the time, please leave a forwarding address and telephone number so that we are able to keep in contact.

Vulnerable Children

Children who are Looked After (LAC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with highest priority and will be known to the school office and Attendance Lead. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home, call to the family social worker or a home visit. Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in school can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible. All children with attendance below 90% will also be considered vulnerable as it is their right to receive a full education and school need to be aware of, and support any issues that a child may be experiencing either at home or school.

Children Missing in Education (CME)

Children who leave the school and their whereabouts are unknown are classed as Children Missing in Education (CME) and will have their details forwarded to the Birmingham Left School No Trace Team (LSNT)

Policy adopted by governors on:

Signed: Chair of Governors

Day 1 of absence

- Telephone call from parent to inform school of absence by 8:45
- Absence recorded in pupil absence book
- If no call, school to telephone contacts - leave messages and record
- Check vulnerable children lists
- Reasons for absence recorded in register
- If child subject to Child Protection Plan or a Looked After Child contact Social Worker or if any known concerns refer to DSL/ MASH/CASS

Day 2 of absence

- Repeat Day 1 procedures
- Additional contact via email/ text/ school comms
- Record absence reasons if not obtained yesterday

Day 3 of absence

- Repeat Day 1 and 2 procedures
- Record absence reasons if not obtained yesterday
- If no contact from parents/carers HT/DHT informed for further action.
- Additional contact via letter email/ text/ school comms

Day 4 of absence

- Repeat Day 1 and 2 procedures
- Record absence reasons if not obtained yesterday
- Home Visit/ Safe and Well check if no contact from parents/ carers.
- Consider MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub/ CASS (Children's Advice and Support Service) referral.

Day 5 of absence

- Repeat Day 1 and 2 procedures.
- Link with CT for work if possible and appropriate
- Record absence reasons if not obtained yesterday
- Home Visit/ Safe and Well check if no contact from parents/ carers.