

## Chancellor Park Primary School

### Attendance & Punctuality Policy

#### 1 Introduction

Chancellor Park Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all its pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as swiftly as possible.

Our school will give high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents, pupils and the Education Welfare Service to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

#### 2 Rights and Responsibilities

As agreed in Chancellor Park Primary School's Home-School Agreement and set out in the school's prospectus:

The school will encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.

Chancellor Park Primary School staff will set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate absenteeism and lateness. Formal attendance reviews take on a half-termly basis and any identified concerns or patterns of irregular attendance will incur correspondence from the school to parents in order to address the issue.

The school will include in annual reports to parents on achievement, pupil's attendance.

Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time and will attend all lessons punctually.

Pupils can expect to be welcomed and receive assistance following periods of absence in order to catch up.

Pupils will be listened to and respected.

Pupils will have good attendance recognised and rewarded in the weekly achievement assembly **and is reported in the weekly newsletter**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child regularly and punctually attends school, properly dressed, equipped and in an appropriate condition to learn.

Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school in the event of pupil illness by telephone call on the first morning of absence.

The school will telephone any parents who have not contacted the school on the child's first day of absence to ascertain their whereabouts.

If attendance problems do develop, the school will take steps to communicate with parents and to work actively with them, with school staff and the Education Welfare Service to try to resolve them.

Parents do not have the right to take children on holiday during term time. Any request for leave of absence must be made in writing, addressed to the Head Teacher and will only be authorised in exceptional, pre-agreed circumstances. We also encourage parents to book medical appointments outside of school hours but accept that this is not always possible. If any such request needs to be made please do so in writing to the School Office.

Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality.

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### 3 Registration

At Chancellor Park Primary School a manual registration system is used which is then input into an Attendance data base.

Manual registers must be marked in ink and where an alteration is necessary this must be clearly identified showing both the original entry and change. Correction fluid must not be used.

Registers will be returned to the School Office at the end of the registration period for safety and will be secured but accessible in case of an emergency.

All notes from parents regarding a pupil's absence will be stored and retained for three years.

### 4 Start and Close of Registration

Chancellor Park Primary School will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning (**9.00am**) and afternoon session (**1.30pm**) within 5 minutes of the registration.

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they should report to the School Office to be entered into the register as late.

### 5 Use of Symbols

The following symbols are used in registers.

Code	Description
/	Present (am)
\	Present (pm)
B	Educated off site (not dual registration)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another establishment)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (not agreed or in excess of agreement)
H	Family holiday
I	Illness (not medical/dental appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers closed)
M	Medical/dental appointments

Code	Description
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence not covered by any other description
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
X	Non-compulsory school-age absence
Y	Enforced closure
Z	Pupil not yet on roll
#	School closed to pupils

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### 6 The Legal Status of Registers

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils' attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised.

A certified extract of the register can be used in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision order in respect of a pupil.

Registers must be kept for a minimum of three years following completion at the end of an academic year.

### 7 Staff Responsibilities for Processes

The Headteacher is responsible for attendance issues and will check the registers on a regular basis to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns. The Administrative Assistant is responsible for analysing the registers and reporting any concerns to the Head Teacher.

The Headteacher will meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer to discuss any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The administrative team are responsible for ensuring that registers are kept safely and are available for inspection to relevant professionals.

The administrative team are responsible for logging attendance information onto the computerised system.

The class teacher is responsible for taking the register daily, once for the AM session and once for the PM session. Upon receipt of the registers into the School Office the Administrative Assistant will ensure that the correct absence code is entered against any pupil who is not present.

The class teacher is responsible for register maintenance of their own class register, including the following:

- Using the correct coloured ink
- Not using correction fluid
- Ensuring all mistakes are amended with the original information still clear and corrections clearly marked
- Ensuring that the registers are kept neatly allowing for ease of reading at all times but especially in an emergency situation i.e. during a fire procedure

Chancellor Park Primary School will ensure that all staff are aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Each pupil should be called by name when the register is being taken.

### 8 Procedures for Following Up Absence/Lateness

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school on the first morning of the child's absence. If this contact is not made the school will:

- Contact the parent by telephone, or if the parent is unobtainable
- Write a letter requesting information

If the above actions do not elicit an explanation for the absence and the absence continues, a further letter will be sent (*absence letter 1*) to the parents/carers. This letter will also be sent if a pupil is absent for more than 5 days within a 4 week period.

If this letter does not elicit an explanation for the absence a second letter will be sent (*absence letter 2*) to the parent/carer, the school's Educational Welfare Officer will be informed and the parent invited into the school by the Headteacher. The meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the child from attending school. The parent/carer will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.

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If the pupil's difficulties are not resolved at this meeting than a formal referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Officer, and a formal intervention will be planned.

If a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks, in exceptional circumstances there will be provision to allow the pupil to ease back into the school system. In the event of a pupil returning after a long term absence then an individual reintegration programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible.

Where a pupil is persistently late the school will write to the parent/carer confirming the start time of school and request that they ensure that their child arrives in good time for the start of the school day. They will also be informed in this letter that the EWO regularly monitors the registers and will pick up on any persistent lateness or absenteeism.

### 9 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

All requests for leave of absence must be made in advance, in writing for the attention of the Head Teacher.

Absence for the following reasons could be **authorised** where parents have followed the appropriate procedure.

- Sickness (telephone call on first day of absence)
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (written notification to School Office)
- Days of religious observance – (written request to Head Teacher)
- Exceptional family circumstances i.e. bereavement (written request to Head Teacher)
- For service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time
- Transport arranged by the LEA has failed to arrive where the pupil lives beyond the statutory walking distance

Any other request for absence (ie family holiday) will not be authorised. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have been amended as from 1st September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed, together with the right for parents to apply for up to ten days holiday during term time. Headteachers are no longer permitted to grant leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It may be necessary for the school or Educational Welfare Officer to ask the parent/carer to provide the school with written evidence of reason for absence e.g.

- Appointment cards/letters
- Medical certificate
- Letter from GP

**Parents must be aware that it is possible for a school to request that the Education Welfare Service consider a Penalty Notice if deemed necessary in individual cases where unauthorised leave has been taken. As from September 2013, The Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If a Penalty Notice is not paid, court proceedings may follow.**

If there is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the school or Educational Welfare Officer may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

### 10 Strategies for Promoting Attendance/Punctuality

In the belief that pupil's are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs, the curriculum will be reviewed regularly.

Attendance statistics will collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.

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Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the Home School Agreement, school prospectus and on the school website.

Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters, parents' evenings and pupils reports will be used.

Parents, pupils and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence

Pupils with a known attendance problem being admitted to school will be interviewed with the parents and set targets for improvement.

Parents will be kept informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

All issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties, are to be promptly investigated by the school.

Chancellor Park Primary School will have regular meetings with the Educational Welfare Officer, in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.

This policy will be reviewed to its effective implementation on an annual basis and updated as appropriate.