

CORSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pupil Attendance Policy



Reviewed: February 2019

Policy Ratified by the Governing Body:
January 2019

Next Review Date: February 2022

Corsham Primary School

Pupil Attendance Policy

AIMS

Corsham Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this pupil attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each term the school will examine its attendance figures. Attendance/ absence targets are set which reflect both National and school attendance targets. We will review systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure we are achieving our set goal.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance goal.

STATEMENTS OF EXPECTATIONS

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

What is expected of the pupils:

- To respect themselves and others
- To do all they can to attend school regularly and punctually
- To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied
- To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging
- To be happy and encourage others to feel happy

Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where attendance at school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school, education welfare services and the social services where such a child's attendance is irregular.

What is expected of the parents/carers:

- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum
- To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness
- To work closely with the school and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in compassionate/ highly exceptional circumstances.
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regard to attendance during important academic times such as SATs
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements

Corsham Primary School will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive in educating every individual pupil. School attendance will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity, off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

What is expected of the School:

- To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of
- To meet the legal requirements set out by the Government
- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance
- To develop procedures which enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence, with effective monitoring and intervention
- To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 Education Act
- To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absence and promote good attendance
- To encourage open communication channels between home and school
- To develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees
- To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the EWO
- To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum

As an Academy we have a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children. This has been delegated to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) which the Local Authority provides. The EWS is the enforcement agency of the LA and, as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The court may fine the parent and put in place a School Attendance Order (SAO), an Education Supervision Order (ESO) or a Parenting Order.

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 Head of School 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 as N (NO reason yet provided for absence) in the first instance.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50 am. The registers will 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 authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.35 pm.
The registers will close at 2.00 pm.

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

If there has been no notification to the class teacher the Administrative Team will contact the parents/ carers directly by telephone to ascertain the reason for absence.

Third Day Absence

If a child is still away after three days the reason is unknown despite attempts to contact the parents/ carers by telephone then a standard letter will be posted home requesting that they contact the school urgently to notify the reason for absence.

Continuing Absence

If there has still been no contact with the parents the Administrative Team will bring the case to the attention of the Head of School who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Tenth Day Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Education Welfare Officer. The school will include details of the action they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Administrative Team 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).

	1st Stage Absence	2nd Stage - After period of absence	3rd Stage - After period of absence	4th Stage - after period of absence
Parent	Contacts school with reason by phone and/or letter	Parent provides a letter stating reason for absence	Parent returns slip from letter with reason	Parent returns slip from letter with reason
School	School may phone parent to inform them that the child is not in school and enquire about a reason why.	School sends a letter by post requesting a reason for absence, informing parent absence will be unauthorised if no response within 5 days.	The register is marked appropriately with reason for absence provided by parent.	The register is marked as an unauthorised absence if no response from parent after 5 days.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence, all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring 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

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

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/ carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/ School agreement is used to support good attendance at school.

Letters are sent out to alert parents and carers to their child's attendance/ absence at the end of each academic year.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time will not be authorised. Parents will be reminded that requests for holidays will be refused except in compassionate /highly exceptional circumstances. Parents must apply in advance for permission.

The Registration System

The School will use School Pod computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

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

- C Other circumstances (e.g. bereavement, agreed special occasions, performances, other approved absences not covered by other codes).
- E Excluded
- F Extended family holiday (agreed)
- H Family holiday (agreed)
- I Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)
- M Medical / Dental appointments
- R Religious observance
- S Study leave
- T Traveller absence

APPROVED EDUCATION ACTIVITY

- B Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
- D Dual registration (ie pupil attending other establishment)
- J Interview
- P Approved sporting activity
- V Educational visit or trip
- W Work experience

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- G Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)
- N No reason yet provided for absence
- O Unauthorised absence
- U Late (after registers closed)

Pupils' attendance is stored and kept securely on School POD.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each term on the Head Teacher's report to the Local Governing Body.

The Heads of School, Administrative Team and the Education Welfare Officer will review the attendance of all the schools pupils on a termly basis. Pupils are identified as cause for concern or with less than 90% attendance, on a more regular basis. A letter will be sent to the parent/ carer of any pupil identified as having attendance problems informing them of the school's concerns and offering support to resolve any problems that may be impeding a child from attending. The pupil's attendance will be closely monitored and, if after a two week period there appears to be no improvement, the parents of the pupil will be invited to a meeting with the Head of School to discuss the issue and hopefully resolve any problems preventing the pupil from attending. If the parent/ carers do not attend the meeting, or after such meeting, the attendance of the pupil does not improve a formal referral to the EWO will be made. The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed where relevant and provide information to assist the school to strategically manage attendance issues. The EWO will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support their role.

Strategies used to promote good attendance and punctuality

1. Class teacher will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel they have and can succeed.
2. Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals.
3. Pupil attendance figures will be published with their annual academic reports alongside highlighting what the child's attendance/ absence equates to in days or weeks.

Equal Opportunities

When writing and reviewing this policy staff have completed an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment in order to ensure it complies with equality obligations outlined in anti-discrimination legislation. We believe the policy positively reflects the aims and ambitions identified in Corsham Primary's Single Equality Scheme.

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/ her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he/she 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 VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

The legal requirements for keeping Register and Admission Roll are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

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