



CHARLESWORTH SCHOOL

...from tiny acorns great oaks grow

Attendance Policy



Purpose:

The aim of this purpose of this policy is to ensure that the school meets its legal requirements and in doing so promotes a practice of good attendance with its pupils. It also sets out to ensure that parents are aware of and fulfil their legal requirements in guaranteeing their child's attendance at school. Charlesworth School will make every attempt to fully support and challenge both child and parent through the procedures outlined in this policy to this purpose.

Aims And Objectives

At Charlesworth School seeks to ensure that all children are well prepared for the next stage of their education and to achieve the aims outlined in our Curriculum Vision so that our pupils:

- Develop a sense of awe and wonder for the world around them
- Become articulate in communicating their ideas and in listening to and considering the ideas of those around them
- Are able to make informed risks in their learning
- Develop the wisdom to constructively challenge perceptions, opinions and actions in order to embed their learning
- Have a secure understanding of and actively practice values promoted by the Christian faith

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. Charlesworth Governing Body believe that regular school attendance is key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

We value all pupils and will work with all families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties. We also recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement.

Legal Framework:

The School Attendance and Parental Responsibility Measures Statutory Guidance (Jan 2015) clearly states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Roles And Responsibilities:

We believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community

Governors:

Members of the Governing Body will:-

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents;
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance, monitor the implementation of the policy and report to the Governing Body;
- Ensure that current Attendance related legislation is complied with;
- Agree school attendance targets and submit these for agreement by the Governing Body;
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time;
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance;
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site;
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

Headteacher:

The Headteacher, with the support of designated senior members of staff will:-

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents;
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents;

- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues;
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with;
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time;
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body;
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented;
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families where needed;
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

Teachers and Support Staff:

Class Teachers and other members of the support staff will:-

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents;
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents;
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve;
- Comply with the Registration Regulations, England, 2006 and other attendance related legislation;
- Implement systems to report and monitor the attendance and reasons for absence of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site;
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions;
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

Parents:

The school will work in partnership with parents to ensure that they:-

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress;

- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment;
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations;
- Contact the school on the morning of the first day of absence to let them know the reason why the child is absent and the expected date of return;
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours. If this is not possible, then to show appropriate evidence for the appointment e.g., medical appointment cards;
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties;
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance;
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home;
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before;
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family;
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time, where this is unavoidable, **send a written leave request to the Head Teacher in advance of booking the holiday.**

Procedures:

Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received. Parents should advise the school by telephone on the morning of the first day of absence and provide the school with a reason for the absence and an expected date of return.

Illness In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. **Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness.** This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. **Parents should show the appointment card to school.**

Other Authorised Circumstances This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to **exceptional** circumstances, for example family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded (No alternative provision made) Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher must make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Family Holidays and Extended Leave Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. **Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday** and should be made aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year.

The school governors have agreed that absence during term time for family holidays **will not be authorised**. The Headteacher can authorise up to 10 days absence where there are exceptional circumstances. **The opportunity for a cheap holiday will not in itself qualify as exceptional circumstance.** Parents wishing to take their child out of school during term time must obtain a **Request for Authorised Absence** form from the school office. This must be completed and returned well in advance of the planned absence as retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually and will take the following factors into account:

- Length of the proposed leave
- Age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record
- Proximity of SAT's and public examinations
- Pupil's ability to catch up the work missed
- Pupil's educational needs
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- When the request was made
- Additional evidence supplied by the parent e.g., Holiday allocations from their employer that do not allow for school holidays.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state:

- The expected date of return
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place. If a child has not returned within 10 days, the school will follow the Policy on Children Missing from Education.

If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil is still absent, the absence will be **unauthorised**. In such cases the parent will be notified that school may issue a Penalty Notice and that future planned absences e.g., family holidays must be arranged during the school holidays.

In **exceptional circumstances** absences of more than 10 school days may be agreed. In such cases, consideration will also be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as minority ethnic children returning to their country of origin. In these cases granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified. **In all cases though, parents will be required to justify why the holiday needs to be taken during term time.**

Religious Observance Charlesworth School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and it's community. It recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent due to religious observance. However, in the interests of ensuring a child's access top the curriculum and the

opportunity to fulfil their potential as a learner, it is identified as reasonable that no more than three days in total in any academic year. **Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.**

Traveller Absence The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school. If a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

Charlesworth School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school, in such cases, the pupil's school place at the school will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

The school will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return. Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced

Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Late Arrival Registration begins at **9.05am for KS2 and 9.15am for EYFS/KS1**, pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at **9.30am in KS2 and 9.50am in EYFS/KS1**, pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late, this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

On arrival after the close of register, parents should ensure that their child reports immediately to the school office or their class teacher to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school. The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment. The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Unauthorised absence Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations that will not be accepted:-

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school

Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
- Left the school but not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil

Using Attendance Data

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every half term, the School Business Assistant will provide a monitoring report for the Attendance Review Meeting which is attended by the Headteacher and Designated Governor. This will be done in accordance with the agreed standing agenda and notes of the discussion will be recorded. The following RAG rating will be used to identify pupil causing concern:-

GREEN (Good)	pupils with attendance between 100% and 95%
AMBER (Monitor)	pupils with attendance between 94% and 90%
RED (Causing Concern)	pupils with attendance below 90%*

**A child is considered to be Persistently Absent (PA) when attendance falls below 90%*

In the case of already targeted pupils, a monthly review of attendance data and progress towards targets will take place. This will include changers in attendance patterns, family circumstances and context, a review of previous interventions and proposed future action. This pupil level data will be used to trigger an escalation of school action as set out in the escalation of intervention. Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

The Headteacher will share attendance data with the Department for Education and the local authority as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Support Systems

School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Charlesworth also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Early Help Plans
- Referrals to support agencies
- Referral to parenting courses
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship groups

- PSHCE
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials
- Family learning opportunities
- Reward systems
- Time-limited part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the use of legal sanctions will be considered.

Legal Sanctions

Prosecution Where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Parenting Contracts (School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures 2015) A Parenting contract is a voluntary agreement between school and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance.

The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly. It can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

Penalty Notices (School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures 2015)

Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school.
- A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve .

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually at the Autumn Term meeting of the Governing Body and amended as necessary.

Attendance Policy

Charlesworth School

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Minute No.</u>
Approved by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
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Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____
Reviewed by Governors	_____	_____

Staff Signature Sheet

Name	Signature	Date

Appendices

1. Attendance Review Agenda
2. Application for Leave

Attendance Review Agenda Items

1. Review of current whole school attendance
 - Comparison to target set
 - Comparison to previous term
 - Comparison to previous years
 - Year group/Class variations
 - Vulnerable cohort variations (SEN/Pupil Premium)

2. Monitoring of individual pupils
 - Attendance below 90% (At risk of PA)
 - Support and interventions
 - Review of PA cohort
 - Attendance Panel meetings (if required)
 - Letters to send out (absence during term time)

3. Impact of recent interventions (if needed)
 - Whole school
 - Group interventions
 - Individual Interventions

4. Review of policy and procedure

5. Date of next meeting

Reports required for meeting:-

- ✓ *Class Group Attendance Analysis from beginning of term*
- ✓ *Class Group Attendance Analysis from beginning of year*
- ✓ *Class Group Attendance Analysis for the same period in the previous year*
- ✓ *Attendance Less Than Given Percentage (90% from beginning of year)*
- ✓ *Attendance Less Than Given Percentage (85% from beginning of year)*
- ✓ *Cohort attendance reports on 'All SEN' and 'FSM' from beginning of year*

Appendix 2: Draft Letters and Proformas

CHARLESWORTH SCHOOL

APPLICATION BY PARENT/S FOR A CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

To the Headteacher

Name of Child..... Year Group

Name of Both Parents Mr

Mrs/ Ms/Miss

Address

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I / We wish to apply for our child to be absent from school for EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Dates:

From..... To.....

Total number of days requested

Please supply in as much detail as possible the reason for your request and why you feel it is exceptional circumstances. Please also provide proof (e.g. letter from employer stating reason for leave etc.)

Signed (both parents if applicable)

Date

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THIS FORM SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE HEADTEACHER AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE OF REQUESTED LEAVE.

Did you know that if your child has 10 days off school they miss 5% of their education that year. If this continues throughout their time at primary school, they will have missed nearly half a year of their education!!