



Cheam Park Farm Infants School



Attendance Policy

GOOD ATTENDANCE

We believe that good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the educational and social skills which will equip them for life.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which governors, staff, pupils, parents and Borough School Attendance Service (BSAS) can promote and monitor regular attendance, and intervene at an early stage to identify and rectify any problems which arise in order to avoid educational disadvantage to any pupil.

The staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with families and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right.

The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

We aim to:

- promote good attendance as the norm
- help every child to reach their maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in their school life
- demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school
- establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

To achieve this we plan to:

- help children to be more aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality by class discussion
- provide regular information about the whole school's attendance record through the newsletters
- monitor the attendance registers half termly and contact parents whose children do not achieve 90% attendance

The school uses the following guidance with parents and pupils:

Your child's attendance is above 97%. (Outstanding)

They are absent less than 6 days in a school year.

They are highly likely to achieve the best levels for their ability by the end of KS1.

Your child's attendance is 94% plus. (Good)

They are absent less than 10 days in the school year.

They will probably achieve the best levels for their ability by the end of KS1.

Your child's attendance is 90% plus. (Satisfactory)

They are missing up to 20 days in each school year – a full month!

This amount of absence will make progress difficult and reduce their level of success.

Your child's attendance is less than 90%. (Unsatisfactory)

They are missing at least 1 or 2 days a fortnight; this is the same as over four months throughout their time at Cheam Park Farm Infants School.

Missing this amount of time will make it extremely difficult for them to keep up in lessons and make progress.

You need to take action! As a parent or carer, you could face a fine or court action.

Rewards for good attendance:

- whole classes who have full or best attendance for 1 week will be rewarded and praised in assembly
- children who achieve 100% attendance termly will be rewarded and praised in assembly
- children who achieve 100% attendance yearly are rewarded by a Headteacher's certificate and a prize
- individual children making significant improvement are rewarded by a Headteacher's certificate and praised in assembly
- for one half term a year the school follows the "Be there Bears" project.

Responsibilities

The Attendance Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- reviewing the Attendance Policy
- liaising with the BSAS
- supporting staff in monitoring and dealing with problems
- supporting families and individual children in sorting out any problems working against good attendance and in helping to set and achieve targets with regard to attendance; publicising facts and figures with regard to the school's attendance record in an easy to understand format
- informing governors of information with regard to attendance.

The Class Teacher is responsible for:

- ensuring that the registers are completed accurately at the beginning of each session;
- ensuring that the Office Administrative Staff are aware of any added absence markers (e.g. if a note arrives establishing that reason for the absence)
- filing absence letters in the child's hanging file
- monitoring the attendance and patterns of absence of the children in their class
- liaising with the Headteacher with regard to any concerns regarding attendance
- ensuring that the delivery of the curriculum is challenging, interesting and stimulating so that children want to attend regularly
- ensuring that the ethos in the class and the school is supportive of good attendance.

The Office Administrative Staff are responsible for:

- updating registers once they have been returned to the office
- entering daily attendance records onto SIMS (Schools Information Management Service)
- processing Application for Pupil Special Authorised Absence Forms
- informing the Class Teacher of absences
- telephoning / emailing families to monitor absences and report to the Headteacher as necessary
- receiving and recording phone calls and other communication from parents
- providing data to attendance co-ordinator, teachers and parents

The parent or carer is responsible for

- getting their children to school and on time (section 444(1) Education Act 1996). In light of this parent/carers are required to follow and understand these procedures if their child is ill and unable to come to school
- letting the school know on the first day of absence why a child is absent
- talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Completing registers:

The register is a legal document and should be completed with care:

- registers should be marked at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions
- registers are formally closed at 9.25am and 1.45pm
- registers must be sent to the Office staff as soon as possible after completion
- children arriving after the start of school must be signed in the late book by the parent/carer at the office
- the Office Administrative staff will check the 'late book' to ensure late entries are recorded in the register. Up to 9.25am late children will be registered with 'L' (late before register closed), after 9.25am they will be given 'U' (late after register closed). If there were a fire, the 'late book' and 'signing out' book would be taken to the assembly point and the teachers told which children have arrived late or left the premises.

Special Authorised Absence

Holidays should be taken during the school holiday periods and the school's policy is that absence for holidays will not be authorised during term time. If parents take their child on holiday during term time, a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority.

Parents must apply in writing to the Headteacher, using the required form from the website or outside the school office, should they wish to take their child/children out of school for any reason during term time. The Headteacher only authorises absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. The expected return date must be specified and adhered to. Absence after this date will be unauthorised. The application for Pupil Special Authorised Absence form along with a copy of the child's attendance is used to inform the decision as to authorise the request or not.

Applications under 'Exceptional circumstances' although considered on a case by case basis will normally be refused. The exceptional circumstance should be of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

Examples of what might constitute exceptional circumstances include:

- A parent or grandparent is seriously/terminally ill and the holiday proposed is likely to be the last such holiday
- There has recently been a death or other significant trauma in the family and it is felt that an immediate holiday might help the child concerned better deal with the situation
- Attending the wedding of a family member

Special authorised absences cannot routinely be approved beyond a total of 10 days across any academic year. Any absence beyond this limit will be considered unauthorised unless the Headteacher has chosen to use discretion on compassionate grounds. The headteacher, in consultation with the governing body of the Academy Trust, may use statutory powers under the Education Act, including the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices, where appropriate. The BSAS may also instigate legal proceedings under Section 444(1a) of the Education Act if appropriate.

Following a special authorised absence, if a child does not return to school 10 days after the expected agreed return date, the school reserves the right to remove their name from the school roll. The resulting vacancy will be filled according to the school's normal admission procedures.

Other Unauthorised Absence

A parent/carer/sibling being unwell is not a reason for absence and parents/carers must endeavour to make arrangements for their child to be brought to school and be collected. The school will direct parents/carers to

external support which may be available and offer help and support as far as practical if this is a long term condition.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments. If appropriate, the child should return to school after the appointment. Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Consequence of Unauthorised Absence

Where a pupil incurs a certain level of unauthorised absence and there is a level of concern, the case may be referred by the Headteacher to the BSAS who will advise and support parents on the pupil's attendance difficulties and if no improvement is made may use statutory powers under the Education Act, including the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices, where appropriate. The BSAS may also instigate legal proceedings under Section 444 (1a) of the Education Act if appropriate.

Child Missing Education

If parents do not provide information about a child's absence and the school cannot make contact with them within 20 school days, then a child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. This means the local authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to locate missing child/children.

Punctuality

At Cheam Park Farm Infants School we feel it is essential that children make a positive start to the school day. If children are late they often miss vital instructions and learning and they can also disrupt the class.

- The school gates are opened at 8.40am and children and parents/carers can come into the playground between 8.40am and 8.50am.
- The school day begins at 8.50am. Registers are taken between 8.50am and 9.00am. Any child / parent /carer entering school after this time must report to the office and will receive a late mark in the register.
- Registers close at 9.25am. Pupils arriving after this time will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment.
- The Headteacher monitors lateness regularly. The school will make contact with parents/carers where there is a pattern of lateness or several number of lates in a half term.

Publication of Policy

This policy will be published on the school's website and a paper copy is available on request from the school office. **A copy of this policy will be referred to in the induction pack for parents/carers of new children.**

Monitoring and Review

Governors will monitor the attendance of pupils annually and set appropriate, challenging targets.
The Children, Families and Community Committee will monitor attendance termly and provide constructive support.

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every three years.

Adopted by staff and governors

Committee.....

Signed..... Date..... Date of next review.....