

Cheam Common Infants' School



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Attendance Policy

2016

Next review: Spring 2018



Attendance Policy

The Department of Children, Schools and Families has established that there shall be 195 school days, 5 of which may be used for staff training and on which the children should not be on the premises.

Policy Statement

(Please note that we regard 'parents' to include carers and legal guardians.)

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.

Cheam Common Infants' aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy with which staff, pupils, parents and the Borough School Attendance Officer can work in partnership. We will monitor attendance and work quickly to solve any identified problems.

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.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and progress, as well as their relationships with friendship groups. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may also affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring children's regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of parents helping to create a pattern of regular attendance which is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff. This is governed by legal statute in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 (Appendix 3) which came into effect on 1st September 2013. This regulation makes clear that head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time except in very exceptional circumstances.

It is very important therefore that parents make sure that their child attends regularly and on time, this policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

We will:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality as the norm
- Help every child to reach his/her maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in school life.
- Demonstrate that the school values good attendance.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

To achieve this we plan to:

- Help children and parents to be more aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Improve communication with parents in relation to their children's attendance.
- Recognise and support the key role of all staff in promoting and monitoring good attendance.
- Maintain regular contact with the Borough School Attendance Officer, who visits the school every half term.

School targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has targets to improve attendance and all parents have an important part to play in meeting these targets. The minimum acceptable level of attendance for this school is **95.2%** attendance for children of statutory school age. We will keep parents updated regularly about progress towards this target and how their child's attendance compares with this target.

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletter and we ask parents for their full support.

People responsible for attendance matters in this school are

- Headteacher & Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Administrative Officer
- Governors

Definitions of Attendance and Absence

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason

- Leave of absence for medical/dental appointments confirmed in writing will be authorised.
- Religious observance confirmed in writing in advance will be authorised.
- Sitting external examinations e.g. music exams may be authorised.
- Fixed period or permanent exclusions will be authorised.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'permission' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the school and the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absences include:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark in the register
- Birthday treats, shopping or day trips

Holidays during term time will be unauthorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is important that parents don't cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Persistent Absence

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. (Please see Appendix 2)

All absence is monitored thoroughly. Any child that is seen to have reached the persistent absence threshold, or is at risk of moving towards it is seen as a priority and parents will be informed of this immediately. All persistent absence cases are routinely made known to the Borough School Attendance Officer from the Local Authority. S/he may contact you and may request a home visit.

Promoting and Supporting Good Attendance

At Cheam Common Infants' we will promote good attendance across the school in the following ways:

- Children receive a certificate for 100% attendance at the end of each term.
- Children receive a prize for 100% attendance at the end of the year.
- Parents will be informed of their child's attendance at parent's evenings each term.
- The class with the highest attendance each half term will be awarded the

Attendance Cup; results will be reported in newsletters.

Absence Procedures:

The school requests that the following procedures are used when a child is absent from the school:

- Parents should e-mail or telephone the school to inform the office by 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence. If the office has not been contacted by 9.30 a.m. a call will be made to the child's parents to establish the reason for absence. On returning to school parents must write or e-mail a note explaining the reason for absence.
- If a child is absent for several days the office may ring the parents as a courtesy call.
- If a child has a medical appointment parents must inform the teacher in writing in advance noting when the child will be absent and when they are expected to return. They may also need to inform the school that their child will require a school lunch on their return.
- Any form of planned absence must be requested using the 'Exceptional Absence During Term-Time' form. (Please see Appendix 1)
- Parents of children with high levels of absence (below 90% attendance) may be asked to meet with the Headteacher to discuss reasons and possible support to improve attendance. This may include a referral to the School Nurse for medical support.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time affects children's schooling as much as any other absence and the school expects parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Parents should remember that any savings they may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost of their child's education.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. The Governing Body does not sanction absence during term time. Any authorisation given by the Headteacher will be at his/her discretion and only in exceptional circumstances and is governed by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulation 2013 which came into effect on 1st September 2013. (Appendix 3)

Exceptional Leave in term time will not be agreed by the Headteacher when:

- A pupil is just starting school, or at the beginning of the school year. This is very important as children need to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- A pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- A pupil's attendance rate is already below 90% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Lateness Procedures:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If children miss the start of the day they can miss work and vital information and news for the day. They miss the chance to socialise with their friends. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing and upsetting for the child.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.55 a.m.**, but children are expected to be in the playground by **8.50a.m.** (All classrooms are open from 8.45 a.m.)

Children will receive a late mark if they are not in class by 9.00 a.m. when the registers are marked.

If children have a persistent late record parents will be asked to meet with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to resolve the problem. However, parents can approach the school for support and advice at any time, if they are having problems getting their child to school on time.

Picking up at the end of the school day

School finishes at **3.10 p.m.** Children will be allowed home ***only*** with parents or known representatives. If there are any changes to your normal collection arrangements, you are requested to either tell your child's teacher in advance or telephone the school office. Pupils may not be collected by children under the age of 16 unless the Headteacher is previously notified in writing by the parent.

If by 3.25 p.m. a child has not been collected the school will make every effort to contact a parent. If contact has not been made by 4.10 p.m. we are required to notify Sutton Police and the Sutton Social Care Team.

The same applies to Clubs and after school activities. If parents have not arrived 15 minutes after the end of the Club school will contact them. Police will be notified after the end of the Club, if a parent has not made contact.

Records are kept of parents who are persistently late in collecting their children at the end of the school day, and the Headteacher will request a meeting with these parents to resolve this situation.

This policy was agreed by staff and Governors in the Spring Term 2016.

APPENDIX 1



Request for Exceptional Absence in School Time

To: The Headteacher Cheam Common Infants' School

Authorised absence in exceptional circumstances is requested for:-

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Dates: From _____ returning to school on _____

Number of days absent from school _____

Reasons for seeking absence during school time:

Signed _____ Parent/Carer Date _____

NB:

- Absence for a holiday will not be authorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances acceptable to the school.
- Absence not approved by the school in writing and in advance will be recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- Please see the notes overleaf.

To be completed by Headteacher

Time off **Authorised**

Unauthorised

Comments:

Signed _____ Date _____

Exceptional Absence in School Time

Additional Notes

1. Parents do not have an automatic right to take a child out of school during term time: permission must be obtained in advance. In considering any request for absence, individual circumstances will be considered, taking account of
 - the age of the pupil
 - the time of year proposed for the trip
 - the purpose of the trip
 - the overall attendance pattern of the pupil and their academic progress
2. Please do not book a holiday during school time.
3. This form must be completed in advance for any planned absence.
4. Parents must state why they consider it essential for the child to take time off school. Exceptional circumstances do not include:
 - availability of cheap holidays;
 - desired accommodation or flights;
 - overlap with beginning or end of term.
5. If a child is kept away for longer than the period agreed, the additional time will normally be treated as unauthorised. Similarly, if a child is taken away without prior written permission, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
6. The school may require that the child continue to practise basic skills in reading, writing and number during the exceptional absence.
7. The Headteacher will refer unauthorised absences to the Borough Attendance Officer when there are more than two occasions when a child has had unauthorised absence from school or the total number of unauthorised absences from school exceeds ten school sessions in any one academic year. She may contact you or request a home visit.

every school day counts

DAYS OFF SCHOOL ADD UP TO LOST LEARNING

190 school days in each year for your child's education		
<p>175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR</p>	→	<p>175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments</p>
Up to 9.5 days of absence		
<p>190 - 180.5 DAYS of Education</p>	<p>9.5 to 19 days of absence</p> <p>180.5 – 171 DAYS of Education</p>	<p>19 or more days of absence. (nearly 4 weeks missed)</p> <p>171 or less DAYS of Education</p>
<p>100% to 95%</p>	<p>95% to 90%</p>	<p>90% or less</p>
<p>GOOD</p> <p>Best chance of success.</p> <p>Gets your child off to a flying start.</p> <p>School will encourage pupils to maintain this high level of attendance.</p>	<p>WORRYING</p> <p>Less chance of success.</p> <p>Makes it harder for your child to make progress.</p> <p>School will be monitoring closely and if attendance doesn't improve will be alerting you to their concerns.</p>	<p>SERIOUS CONCERNS</p> <p>Below the government threshold of 90% which identifies persistently absent pupils.</p> <p>Not fair on your child.</p> <p>School will be investigating the reasons for this high level of absence and referral for possible legal action may be made.</p>

PLEASE DON'T LET YOUR CHILD MISS OUT ON THE EDUCATION THEY DESERVE.

every school day counts

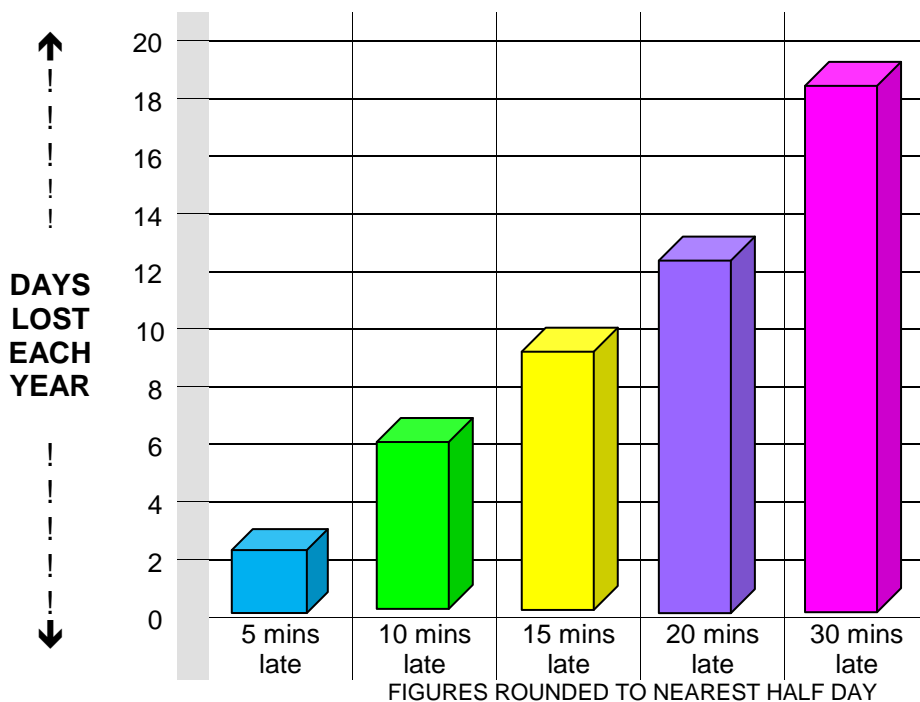
If you are worried about your child's attendance always talk to someone at school about it.
Don't let absences build up.

every school day counts

Being late adds up to a loss of learning

If you are 5 minutes late every day, or collect 5 minutes early, that adds up to over
3 DAYS LOST EACH YEAR

15 minutes late is the same as being absent for
2 WEEKS A YEAR



Being late every day can add up to a lot of lost learning time. As can collecting early for unnecessary appointments that should be arranged outside of school time.
Please help your child to be punctual.

If you are worried about your child's attendance, please talk to someone at school about it.

Appendix 3

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Deleting a pupil from the admission register

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 currently do not provide for a school to delete a pupil from the admission register where the pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age and has failed to meet the academic requirements for entry to their sixth-form.

Amendments to the 2006 Regulations will allow this bringing the regulations into line with the new School Admissions Code 2012, which allows schools to set academic requirements for entry into sixth form.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.