

Cavendish Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Autumn 2006

Attendance Policy

Cavendish Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school implements an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and challenges the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Cavendish Primary School works to maintain an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Aims:

1. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
2. To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
3. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
4. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
5. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
6. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
7. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
8. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

In order to improve the overall attendance of pupils we:

1. Apply the School Attendance Policy consistently.
2. Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
3. Relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.

4. Monitor progress in attendance.

In order to make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school, we:

1. Ensure all staff are familiar with school attendance policy.
2. Keep the governing body informed of attendance issues.
3. Hold induction evening for reception parents.
4. Produce newsletters.
5. Provide appropriate training for appointed/promoted staff.
6. Liaise with education welfare service and discuss relevant attendance issues at multi-disciplinary meetings.

Our framework defining agreed roles and responsibilities and promoting consistency in carrying out designated tasks includes:

1. Following LEA procedures for statutory registration.
2. Making phone/letter contact, using designated school staff, on first day of absence, starting with children on the 'walk to school' register and children whose attendance is causing concern.
3. Ensuring clearly defined late registration procedures.
4. Responding swiftly to lateness (in respect of both pupils and parents).
5. Define clearly the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
6. Timetable TA with responsibility for attendance to meet regularly with Education Welfare Officer.
7. Have clear procedures prior to referral to Education Welfare Officer.
8. Review attendance regularly.
9. Be familiar with the Education Welfare Service's referral and recording system.

In order to provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils we:

1. Highlight attendance in PSHE and assemblies.
2. Make time for vulnerable parents to speak to staff.
3. Seek improved communication with parents e.g. when parents ring in.
4. Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents.
5. Involve parents from earliest stage.

We implement a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data through:

1. computerised records
2. Standardised recording of:
 - authorised/unauthorised absence
 - educational activity

- presence
3. Being consistent in the collection and provision of information.
4. Deciding what information, if any, is provided for:
 - governors
 - pastoral staff
 - other school staff
 - parents
 - pupils (individual or groups)
 - education social work service
5. Identifying developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

In order to further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school we:

1. Initiate first day absence contact.
2. Make full use of computer-generated letters.
3. Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.
4. Explore the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships
5. Provide information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).
6. Encourage all parents into school.
7. Actively discourage parents from taking holidays in term-time.
8. Include a reference to attendance in the home-school agreement.

We will implement a system of rewards and sanctions by:

1. Awarding 100% attendance certificates at the end of each term.
2. Actively promoting attendance and punctuality.
3. Having class rewards for punctuality.
4. Fair and consistent implementation.
5. Taking action which accords with objectives agreed between school and others, e.g. Education Welfare Officer, parent, Behaviour Support Service.

To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies we:

1. Designate key staff for liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies.
2. Give priority to timetabled meetings with Education Welfare Service.
3. Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
4. Gather and record relevant information to assist Education Welfare Service.
5. Hold termly attendance review with Head and Education Welfare Service.
6. Work closely with the BEST team to identify vulnerable attendees.

7. Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings.
8. Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community e.g. community police contact officer.
9. Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.

We will recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence by:

1. Being sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning pupils
2. Involving/informing all staff in/of reintegration process.
3. Providing opportunities for feedback.
4. Considering peer support and mentoring.
5. Involving parents as far as possible.
6. Agreeing timescale for review of reintegration plan.
7. Include Education Welfare Service, parents and pupil in reintegration plan.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each class teacher to encourage attendance and to communicate any concerns over attendance to the head. The head is responsible for monitoring attendance across the whole school and for liaising with the education welfare service and any other agencies that may be involved. An administrative assistant is employed with day-to-day responsibility for the monitoring of registers and the updating of computer records. It is the responsibility of the administrative assistant to inform the class teacher and headteacher of any unusual patterns of attendance. The head or deputy is responsible for deciding whether an absence should be authorised. The Headteacher will include reminders about regular attendance and unauthorised absences in the school newsletter and will keep Governors informed about attendance through the headteacher's report.

There is a named governor for attendance who meets regularly with the headteacher and reports to the Full Governing Body via the PP&P committee.

Holidays in term Time

No holidays in term time will be authorised and the Education Welfare Service will be informed of all such absences.

Extended leave for an overseas family visit

The school will follow LA guidelines in dealing with extended leave. Parents who wish to take their child away for an overseas visit must apply in writing to the Headteacher. The family will need to prove exceptional circumstances for visits lasting longer than two weeks in an academic year. A period of six weeks is the recommended maximum for such visits. Approval will be given on the strict condition that the child will return on an agreed date. A contact address should be given. Absences for longer than two weeks may result in the child being removed from the school roll.

Traveller children

The school will follow LA guidance on the policy to be used with traveller children.

Marking of registers

Class teachers or teaching assistants complete the register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and send the completed register to the school office. Latecomers should sign in the book at the office. Any child arriving more than 10 minutes after the start of the session will be recorded as late and, if later than 30 minutes, the time of arrival noted. The LA marking system is used. All absence notes are passed on to the administrative assistant and relevant information shared with school staff.

Persistent Absences

The administrative assistant monitors the registers and gives the headteacher a print out of any unusual absence statistics. Any child whose attendance is a cause for concern is highlighted. If there does not appear to be a plausible reason for the absence (e.g. a bout of illness) the family will be contacted. Where absence is significantly higher than average a letter from the Headteacher is sent to the family and the EWO is informed. If the absence persists the EWO may contact the family directly.

School Prospectus

Annual authorised and unauthorised absence statistics are published in the school prospectus.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy.

Anne-Marie Inwood
Review Date: Autumn 2009

Autumn 2006