

Churchstanton Primary School



Attendance Policy

Approved by the Board of Governors of Churchstanton Primary School:

Chair of Governors	Mr Jon Wood
Date Approved	February 2023
Proposed Review Date	February 2025

Rationale:

At Churchstanton we expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

Aims

We aim to:

- Ensure that the school's procedures match legislation and meet health and safety requirements
- Have clear and accurate records of attendance, ensuring consistency between teachers and classes
- Ensure that records are accurate in the event of an evacuation
- Ensure that procedures are agreed for following up absences where necessary
- Make clear to parents the legal position regarding attendance, including the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence
- Report, as required, details regarding attendance to the Local Authority or Department for Educational Standards
- Encourage punctual and regular attendance in school
- Work towards agreed targets for improving attendance
- The Head Teacher regularly informs and reminds parents of their responsibilities regarding attendance.
- Absences of any kind are shown on the child's end of year report.
- The Head Teacher will deal with persistent lateness, with or without explanation by meeting with the parents and/or letters.
- The school's attendance figures are collated termly and sent to the DfES. The school also published its own attendance figures in pupils' reports.
- We liaise closely with other schools in the locality in attendance matters.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Definitions:

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as

authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

For absences over three days, medical evidence may be requested. It would be helpful for our records if parents and carers were able to bring in any evidence they have such as prescribed medication or compliment slip showing they have sought medical advice.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.

Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

If a child is absent

Classrooms open at 8.40am and school starts at 8.50am. When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in a register. Registers close at 9.20am and 1.30pm. A book for late arrivals is kept in the school office for parents/carers to sign when bringing children in. After checking the 'late book' and confirming with the class teacher, the school office will telephone the parent/carer that morning to check the situation and record the information. This is then monitored by the school office.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should notify the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent/carer, in order to check on the safety of the child.

Request for leave of absence

The Government have issued schools with new legislation which will only allow Head Teachers to grant leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances**. We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. If parents/carers make a request for leave in term time it will only be authorised if the school deems that there are exceptional circumstances and the reasons for this to happen.

Such exceptional circumstances may be:

- Emergency service / forces personnel with proof of enforced holiday period
- Holiday industry employees with proof of this being the ONLY time period allowed by employer
- One transcontinental leave request per Key Stage for a very significant extended family event, including seeing an elderly / seriously ill relative

Any unauthorised absence such as taking holidays in term time when they have not been approved by the school, may result in a fixed term penalty notice being issued by the Education Attendance Service.

Long-term absence

When a child has an illness that means they will be away from school over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

Repeated absence

Any child whose attendance falls below 90% will be discussed at regular attendance meetings. The school will contact the parent/carer of any child whose attendance is considered to be of concern. Each half term holiday the school will contact parents of all children whose attendance is less than 90%. If the situation does not improve the Attendance Officer may intervene and in the case of unauthorised absence this may mean that a penalty notice will be issued if this is deemed necessary to improve overall attendance.

Unauthorised absence is reported to the Attendance Officer at regular half termly meetings.

Rewards for good attendance

Our Golden Gnome is awarded to the class with the highest attendance each Friday in our sharing assembly. This is also reported in our 'Catch Up' newsletter.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and to seek and ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The rates of attendance will be reported in the school profile.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance and lateness in their class, and following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Head Teacher / Senior Teacher, who will contact the parents/carers.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.