

CLIFFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND
INFANT SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT FOR ATTENDANCE

To be Reviewed : July 2016
Reviewed by : S. Preston

Rationale

Clifford Church of England Infant School is committed to maximising the achievement of all children. There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement. Regular attendance and good punctuality are vital to educational achievement.

Aims of the Policy

- To encourage all children to achieve their maximum potential.
- To encourage parents/carers to play the vital role of supporting the school and encourage children to reach good attendance levels.
- To monitor and track children's attendance and punctuality through effective systems.

Broad Guidelines/Procedures

Section 1 : Expectations

The school expects children:

- To attend regularly and on time for school.

The school expects parents/carers:

- To ensure their child arrives on time.
- To ensure they contact the administrator on the first day their child is unable to attend and that their child returns to school with an absence note.
- To inform the class teacher, and seek authorisation, for any forthcoming appointments or holidays and ensure the continuity of their child's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period and arranging appointments outside of the school day.

Section 2 : Attendance Procedures

(a) Register Procedure

- Registration begins at 8.50am each morning and 12.55pm in the afternoon.
- Teachers should insert a mark for every child whether it is a present mark or an absent mark.
- Staff should be in their classroom at the start of the registration period.
- If children arrive after 9.00am they will be deemed late.
- The register will be brought to the school office immediately after morning and afternoon registration.

(b) Dealing with Absence

- Teachers should encourage parents/carers to bring absence notes on the first day of return.
- The office will deal with absence notes. They will collect in notes and enter appropriate symbols in the register.
- The office will confirm reasons for absences.
- A child's absence on the first day will be followed up, initially by the administrator and then the Headteacher.

(c) The School's Response to Poor Attendance

- Parents are asked to contact the school on the first day of their child's absence.
- The administrator will record all incoming messages from parents.
- The school will contact home on the first day of absence.
- Where the school is concerned about a child's attendance they may seek expert advice.
- Where a child's attendance has fallen below 85%, (in accordance with DCFS guidelines) the Headteacher will discuss this with the parents and they will be put on a list of concern. Children whose attendance is below 85% will be on the red list; children whose attendance is less than 90% but above 85% will be on an amber list. This list will be compiled every half-term and the Headteacher will take appropriate action.
- Where a child's attendance fails to improve, has fallen below 75%, the school may refer the child to outside agencies and call in the parents.
- The school may implement a parental contract when a child's attendance causes concern, and will follow the agreed LA Code of Conduct. (See the attached Code of Conduct).

Section 3 : Attendance Roles and Responsibilities and Procedures

The teachers will :-

- Complete registers accurately, during every registration session and return as soon as possible to the office.

The Headteacher will :-

- Obtain and disseminate attendance data for monitoring all children.
- Target individual children with known punctuality/attendance problems and monitor these children closely, specifically those with attendance rates between 85% and 75%.
- Support the role of the teacher.
- Liaise with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance.

The administrator will :-

- Telephone parents on the first day of absence when students are absent without notification.
- Ensure that all morning and afternoon registers have been collected marked and returned.
- Refer any unusual circumstances to the Headteacher.
- Prepare and send letters home for any absent child who has not been contacted.
- Print out new registers on a weekly basis.
- Update the child database as children are taken on and off the school roll.
- Print out personal attendance records, attendance figures, school population and other reports as requested.
- Enter all terms, dates and holidays on a yearly basis to ensure the registers comply with the database.

Guidelines Regarding Authorisation of School Absence

Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the school to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation, doubt remains about the explanation offered, or when no

explanation is forthcoming at all, the absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Schools should communicate to parents their policies with regard to the notification and categorisation of absence. Some parents, such as those whose first language is not English, may experience difficulty in providing notes. In such cases, schools should seek to make alternative arrangements, for example through a neighbour, brother or sister, or a community worker.

Schools are encouraged to keep all absence notes for at least a year.

Absence should be authorised if :-

- The child is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents belong.
- The child has Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area, giving reasonable indication of their intention to return.
- The child has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has given leave of absence.
- The child is attending an interview for a place at another school.
- The child is involved in an exceptional special occasion, eg. a family wedding or family bereavement. In authorising such absences the individual circumstances of the particular case and the child's overall pattern of attendance should be considered.

Absence should be unauthorised if :-

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The child is staying at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the DCFS guidance suggests that absence in such cases should be granted in exceptional circumstances).
- A family holiday is taken in term time.