



Attendance Policy

'Learn, Love and Grow with God'

POLICY NAME: E SAFETY	
Policy area	Safeguarding
Policy Author	J Chubb
Status	Approved
Category	School Specific
Implementation Date	Summer Term 23
Review cycle	Annual
Next review date	Summer Term 24
Related policies/ documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding • Staff handbook

Document Control

Date	Version	Comments
May 23	1	

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1 Introduction

Our core values of community, resilience, respect, integrity and excellence run through everything that we do at Clapham and Patching CofE primary School. It is vital that our children attend school regularly in order to 'Learn, Love and Grow with God'.

School education provides the vital foundations of a child's life. It has been proved that regular nonattendance can severely impede academic, spiritual and social development. Parents/Carers and staff work in partnership in making educational success, and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to everything that Clapham and Patching CofE Primary School has to offer. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly, and on time, every day unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.



2 Legal Framework

The law states that all pupils of compulsory school age (5-16) should attend school regularly to obtain the maximum benefit from their education. A pupil is required by law (under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and Regulations of 2006 and 2010) to attend regularly at the school where they are registered.

The school is required to differentiate between authorised (Appendix 1) and unauthorised (Appendix 2) absence. It is expected that the parent/carer will contact school to inform them concerning absence of their child, **however, it is for the school to judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence.**

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Section 105 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows the Local Authority to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school.

3 Rights and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of everyone (pupils, parents, governors and all staff) in the school to improve the attendance. This is achieved by a close partnership between the Local Authority, parents and support agencies. If a child is ill or has medical appointments, parents/carers must inform the school of the reason for absence either verbally, by telephone, email or letter.

4 Attendance Registers

Registers are legal documents that may be used in evidence where parents are being prosecuted for attendance offences. They are retained in school for a period of three years. The governing body are legally responsible for the attendance register and must register with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. In the register children will be entered under their legal name, i.e. the name on their birth certificate or as changed by deed poll, their known as name may be shown on the register in brackets. Registers at Clapham and Patching CofE Primary School are completed using the SIMS management system. Electronic registers are completed twice a day by class teachers or HLTAs. Registers should be completed and closed by 8.55 am. Children arriving after this time must enter through the main school entrance and will be marked as late by the school office. Registers in the afternoon need to be completed by 1.10pm.

If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, the register must show whether this was authorised or unauthorised.

- Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. Parents are expected to complete an absence request form (either available electronically on the school Parent App or as a hard copy from the school office) for all absences other than sickness.
- All other absences must be treated as unauthorised.
- Children who have 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10 week period may be referred to WSCC for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) warning. School will make parents/carers aware if this is likely to be a possibility.

5 Pupils

All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually. Where there are difficulties, support will be offered from Class Teachers and the Head of School. The school Attendance Team will monitor all attendance closely in a fortnightly meeting, and will investigate if a pupil is regularly late or missing school. Calls will be made to parents to make them aware of their child's attendance, its implications should it not improve over time and to offer support, where appropriate.

6 Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time. They are expected to notify the school promptly on the school telephone number if their child cannot attend and any absence will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received. The school office will contact a parent on the first day of absence if no reason has been provided. Parents are discouraged from making medical/dental appointments during school time and only expected to remove their child from school for the minimum period of time when this is unavoidable.

7 Medical/Dental Appointments

All appointments need to be reported to the School Office prior to the appointment, along with your appointment card, letter or text. This will be photocopied and kept on file. An absence for a medical appointment can only be authorised if evidence is provided.

8 Late Arrivals

Children can arrive at school from **8.30am** and the gate is open until 8.40. Pupils that arrive after 8.45 are marked as late. Lateness disrupts the start of the day for other pupils in the class. Punctuality is important. Children who are repeatedly late miss the vital initial input to the first session and this impedes their academic progress.

9 End of the Day

The school day ends at **3:15 pm**. Any pupils not collected at the end of the school day will be brought to the School Office and parents will be contacted. We request that parents inform the child of any change of school leaving arrangements at the beginning of the day. The School Office can notify the child, in the event of an emergency, of what they should do after school, but this may be difficult if enough time is not given to get the message to the child.

10 Absences/Illness

It is a parent and carers' responsibility to advise the school of their child's correct reason for absence. Parents/carers must inform the school on the first day of absence on 01903 871214 where an answerphone message can be left. If parents/carers have not contacted the school by 9.15am, the school's office staff will call parents/carers to ascertain the reason for absence.

Due to safeguarding, if we have still not heard from the parent/carer, a member of the school safeguarding team may consider visiting the home to ensure that the child is safe.

11 Family Holidays

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to take children out of school for the purpose of a holiday. Holidays will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and additional evidence will be requested for these circumstances. If permission is not granted and the child is taken out of school for the holiday, a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority on behalf of the school. This Penalty Notice is currently £60.00 per parent/carer per child. We recognise that losing important time in school can have a significant impact on a child's learning and may result in him/her not being ready for the next stage of their education.

12 Removing from Roll

When a pupil leaves Clapham and Patching CofE Primary School they will not be removed from the school roll until they have been accepted onto the roll of another school or until we have authorisation from the Local Authority to remove the child from the school roll. School will make all reasonable attempts to locate the child. School will enter the pupil's details on the school 2 school database (S2S).

13 Suspected changes of Address

When it is suspected that a family has moved away from the area without notifying the school, the school will make all reasonable attempts to locate the family. The CME (Children Missing in Education) Officer at West Sussex County Council will be notified in writing of the missing child and what attempts school have made to locate the child and their family. The child can then be removed from the school roll after a period of 4 weeks and their name placed on the school 2 school database (S2S) for missing children.

14 School Strategies for Promoting Good Attendance

Clapham and Patching CofE Primary School will provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, valued and welcome. Our values of **Respect, Resilience, Integrity, Community** and **Excellence** demonstrate that pupils feel their presence is important and that it is vital for their achievement and progress.

Pupils who may feel vulnerable, are experiencing difficulties attending class, have a diagnosed medical condition or have friendship problems will be supported and given strategies to help them cope. School staff liaise with each other and outside agencies to support parents/carers and children. Attendance data is produced fortnightly and analysed in order to identify absence patterns as well as reasons for absence.

Class Teachers praise children for good attendance and this is highlighted in assemblies, shared with families and visibly celebrated around school.

The school will use the Red/Amber/Green system of attendance letters where each parent will receive a termly letter regarding their child's attendance – Red for attendance below 90%, Amber for attendance between 90% - 95% and Green for attendance above 96%– 100%.

Pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern will be monitored closely and parents will be contacted to make them aware of school concerns.

We will require medical evidence to authorise any absences through illness if a child fails to attend school on a regular basis. [Working Together to Improve School Attendance Summary of Responsibilities Where a mental Health Issue is Affecting Attendance](#)

School staff will liaise with other services/agencies that may assist pupils who are experiencing difficulties.

- Discussion on transfer (with infant, primary and secondary schools) will identify pupils who require extra support or pastoral support programmes involving a multi-agency plan.
- The Head of School will report attendance information to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

Appendix 1 – Authorised Absences

An absence may be counted as authorised if a child is absent:

- When prevented from attending by sickness
- On a day set aside for religious observance

- On approved work experience
- Participating in a public performance
- Absence from learning approved by the Head of School e.g. as part of the traveller community

Appendix 2 – Unauthorised Absences

Circumstances that may lead to parentally condoned absences include:

- The child's parent/carer being ill
- A pupil being used as a child minder
- A pupil being used to support members of the family
- Family work patterns
- Indulging a child who wants to stay at home
- A child's birthday
- A parent's inability to bring the child to school
- Child used as an interpreter
- Absence without the authorisation of the head of School