

Chapel St Leonards Primary School

Attendance Policy

Rationale

The staff and Governors of Chapel St Leonards Primary School regard good attendance and punctuality as a high priority. We are committed to a whole school approach, which means we all work in partnership with parents, carers, our local community and a wide range of external agencies. Of the 365 days in a year, 190 are school days (52%), which leaves 175 non-school days (48%) for children to spend with their families, have visit, take holidays and attend appointments. We also work closely with the Local Authority and the Community Inclusive Trust for advice and any actions we may need to take.

The school will:

- Offer a safe and supportive environment which welcomes all children regardless of race, gender or ability
- Establish clear and effective procedures for the administration of attendance and punctuality
- Foster a climate where the school community, teachers, parents and carers, and pupils value good attendance and punctuality
- Comply with all legal requirements
- Ensure any child with poor levels of attendance and punctuality are noted, monitored and appropriate action is taken
- Have systems in place offering rewards and incentives for regular attendance and punctuality
- Keep parents and carers informed about their child's attendance through clear established procedures
- Support Governors in taking an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Work in partnership with parents and carers, our Education Welfare officer, the Local Authority, our Pastoral Support, and a number of outside support agencies

Our Expectations

The school expects its pupils to:

- Attend regularly and on time
- Be prepared adequately for the school day
- Comply with the school's policies and procedures

The school expects its parents and carers to:

- Ensure their children attend school every day and on time
- Contact the school on the first day of absence
- Arrange any holidays and if possible, appointments outside school hours
- Regularly update the office with contact details

Parental Responsibility to Notify School

If a child is absent the parent/carer should contact school via the school office stating the name of the child, the class and the reason for absence. Messages can be left. If a parent/carer does not inform the school, the school will telephone the parental home and any other numbers it has to contact home. They will also send a text message if there is no reply and even undertake a home visit if school has serious concerns. School may in some circumstances contact external agencies and/or make a referral to Safeguarding.

Registration

The register is a legal document and as such, can be used in a court of law to establish a pupil's attendance or absence at a particular time on a precise day. The registers are marked at the beginning of each session, morning and afternoon. Electronic registers are marked at 8.55am and 1.10pm each day.

School begins at 8.55am

Pupils arriving **after 8.55am** must enter the school via the school office so their attendance can be registered and the reason for their late arrival be recorded. They will record the pupil's name, time of arrival and reason for late arrival. It is vital that ALL pupils arriving late are signed in for both Health and Safety requirements and the Fire register. They will then code the register **L** (late mark). Registers close at 9.25am. Any pupils arriving after this time will be regarded as absent for the morning session and will be coded **U** (unauthorised absence mark) unless it has been agreed by the Headteacher for specific reasons (e.g. a phased reintegration) This will then be coded appropriately. Parents and Carers must ask for an authorised absence prior to a planned absence.

Registration is repeated for the afternoon session. Any child going home for lunch **MUST** be back before that registration at 1.00pm.

We have a responsibility to encourage punctuality. Any missed time at the beginning of the day means a child will lose important learning time and will often miss the start of a lesson and the teacher input. This has a significant negative impact on your child's access to their learning.

Authorised Absence

Absence may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Sickness
- Religious Observance days in accordance with National Guidelines
- Medical or Dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside school. No child should be absent for more than a reasonable time to attend these.
- Special Circumstances – this can **ONLY** be authorised by the Headteacher and will require the correct application process to be completed
- Permanent or Fixed Term Exclusions

Parents should be aware that:

Since the 1st September 2013, the law has given no entitlements to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for that absence must only be made in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher retains the final say in granting that exceptional circumstance. The Governors cannot override that decision. No application will be granted for the week when Year 6 children take their SAT tests in May. Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time and this school will enforce that process.

Unauthorised Absence

Absences may be recorded as unauthorised for the following reasons:

- Truancy – if a pupil is away from school without authority from the Headteacher, this is considered 'truancy'. This includes absences condoned by parents
- Late after registration is closed (unless there is a legitimate reason or evidence of the reason for the absence provided by a parent/carer and permission is given)
- Any absence which the school does not know about through the usual channels – parents who do not contact school can expect their child's absence to be recorded as unauthorised

- Staying at home to look after a sibling or sick relatives – there may be special circumstances if the child is a registered carer but this needs to be a documented arrangement for a fixed period to be authorised. It is not guaranteed to be authorised
- Going shopping, to the airport, time off for birthday treat, having hair cut or buying shoes etc (these are examples of reasons that have been given)
- Any family holiday that has not been authorised by the Headteacher

Patterns of Absence

The school will use its record of the child's absence to look record the frequency and reasons for a child's absence. This may include an analysis of repeated same day absences any additional information the school may have regarding the whereabouts of the child.

The School's Approach to Promoting Good Attendance and Punctuality

The school will do everything it can to support regular attendance by supporting both children and their families. To support a positive ethos the following weekly and Termly awards will be attached to good attendance.

Weekly

Each child in each class will have a named lollypop stick. All of the children in the class who have 100% attendance for the week will be placed in their 'class attendance cup' and the cup will be brought down to the hall for assembly. One child from each class will be drawn from the cup to receive an attendance prize: a high quality reading book of their choice.

A weekly graph and termly graph for each class will be in place and if the school achieve over 95% at the end of each half term they receive an appropriate reward.

Half Termly

The class with the highest overall attendance will be rewarded with a class 'treat' by the Headteacher

Termly

Children who with an attendance of over 98% will receive an attendance badge and certificate in the final assembly of the term.

Annually

There will also be annual attendance certificates and prizes for children over 98% yearly attendance.

*N.B. The school understands that children with a medical condition or a disability that requires regular appointments and/or treatment may affect this percentage and may make an appropriate adjustment. The school will require documentary evidence of such appointments.

Other illness:

This includes any extended or repeated illness that is affecting attendance; the school will ask for a letter from a medical professional confirming the illness. Our Pastoral Support will check that appointments have been made to support you and offer any further support you may need.

Travellers

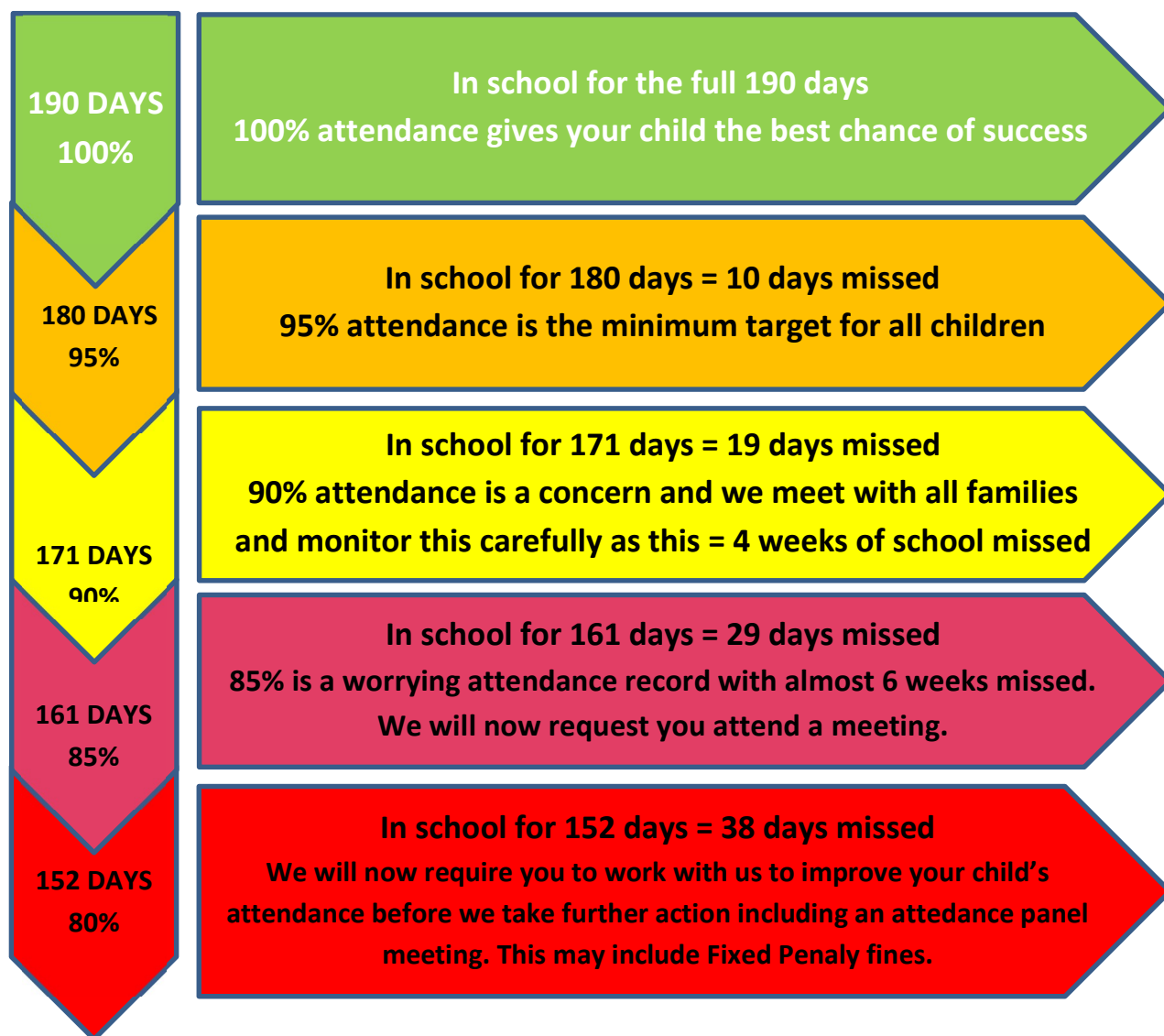
The school is able to code genuine requests for travellers who are travelling. However, this cannot be used for unauthorised extended holidays. The school will use the guidance issued by the DFE

Dual Registration

Some children are 'dual-registered' with another school. The school will use the appropriate code for this and keep in touch with the second school to ensure attendance is monitored.

Expectations and Strategies used for Persistent Absence

The chart below explains the impact of any missed days on your child's education.



6 weekly/Half term Review Process:

Each half term the Headteacher and/or another Senior Leader and/or the SENDCo will use the in school attendance records to review attendance.

Each child's whose attendance falls below that expected will form part of this formal review.

The school reserves the right to pre-empt this process to take action if a child's attendance is of special concern.

90% - 95%

If attendance falls below 95% the senior staff member responsible will consider the reasons for the record.

- Any lateness will be explored
- Periods of non-contested illness will be discounted within the percentage
- Authorised absence will be discounted – unauthorised absence will be explored
- The senior member of staff responsible will contact the parent/carer by letter (LETTER 1 or 2) and the attendance will be monitored for a further half term to see if there is an improvement. The parent will be advised of their child's attendance including a parent leaflet.

85%-90%

If attendance falls below 90% a letter (LETTER 3) will be sent home and the parents/carers be invited into school for an informal meeting with the Headteacher. The Headteacher or Senior staff member may telephone the parent.

- Authorised absences will be discounted
- All lateness will be explored
- If necessary, the parents/carers will be required to attend a more formal meeting
- The school will set targets and offer appropriate support to ensure improvements are made.
- This will be monitored and reviewed every half term
- The parent will be advised of their child's attendance including a parent leaflet.
- There may be a possibility that all subsequent medical absences must be supported by clear evidence (e.g doctor or hospital appointment evidence)

Below 85%

If attendance falls below 85% a letter (LETTER 4) will be sent home and parents/carers may be invited to attend a review of their child's attendance and the reasons for the poor attendance alongside any support that can be offered by school. This is called an *Attendance Panel Meeting*.

- The school will set targets within an action plan.(Appendix 4)
- A school/home contract will be created and signed by everyone (Appendix 3)
- The support plan will incorporate the possibility of a Penalty Notice and this will be discussed
- The school will ensure other agencies support if available
- If appropriate, all subsequent medical absences must be supported by clear evidence (e.g doctor or hospital appointment evidence)

The school reserves the right to escalate this procedure when attendance continues to fall and no reasonable explanations can be given. The school will take any exceptional circumstances into account before proceeding at the half term review process.

Governors may attend any meetings in order to carry out their duties and support the Headteacher.