



Cavendish Community Primary School Policy for Attendance and Punctuality



Rationale

At Cavendish Primary School we believe that attendance and punctuality are key to promoting high levels of achievement, self confidence, social development and positive attitudes towards school amongst our pupils. Getting attendance and punctuality right at this level also helps children to develop good habits for their working future. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the school community – children, parents, staff and governors - take responsibility for promoting the importance of attendance and punctuality.

Purpose

This policy aims to provide guidance to parents on:

- our approach to attendance and punctuality,
- the law in relation to unauthorised absences

1. Punctuality

The school operates a system of staggered starts across the school in order to improve safeguarding, reduce lateness and ease congestion in the local area. Children in Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 2 should arrive at their gate by 8.40am. Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 should arrive by 8.50am.

Children who arrive after their allocated arrival time, with or without their parent/carer, must report to the office at the main entrance to sign in and state the reason for lateness.

Registers close 30 minutes after the start of the school day ie 9.10am for children in Nursery, Reception, Years 1 & 2, and 9.20am for children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Children who arrive after these times will receive an unauthorised absence mark for the morning session.

All urgent or hospital based medical appointments must be authorised with evidence from **the child's** dentist, hospital consultant etc. Routine appointments eg for check ups, should be made outside of school hours wherever possible.

Regular lateness will be investigated by the school and parents may be asked to come in to discuss the issue with the Attendance Officer and/or Headteacher and Governors. If the issue cannot be resolved by the school, further action may be taken, eg penalty notice for fixed fine from the Local Authority

2. Attendance

Children are expected to attend school every day, where possible, for 190 days of the year. School holiday patterns are published well in advance and are on the school website (www.cavendish.manchester.sch.uk), enabling all families to be aware of when their children should be in school.

If your child is unwell, or cannot attend school for any other valid reason, we ask that you telephone us to let us know *before* 8.30am if possible so that we can authorise the absence. There is an answer machine available at all times to take your message.

The registers are checked after morning registration. If a child is found to be absent and the parent/carer has not contacted us with a reason for the absence, we will try to contact them. We need to speak to the parent/carer as soon as possible to check the whereabouts of their child – this is part of our safeguarding duty. *It is very important that you keep us updated with your contact details so that we can get in touch with you easily and quickly.*

We cannot authorise **a child's** absence unless a valid reason is given.

Examples of authorised absences: illness, emergency/urgent medical appointments, recognised religious observance

We will monitor each **child's absence record carefully**. **If we notice patterns such as** frequent absences on Mondays/Fridays, or overall low attendance, we will contact you to investigate the matter further.

Legally, parents/carers have the responsibility to ensure their **child's regular attendance at** the school where they are registered as a pupil. Failure to do so may lead to statutory action, which may include a penalty notice. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in further statutory action being taken against you.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent/carer must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to a parent/carer for unauthorised absence within a three-year period, then the parent/carer must pay the higher rate of £160.

Further periods of absence within three years could mean that alternative action is taken, which may include a parent/carer being taken to court, with no option to pay a penalty notice.

If you are experiencing any attendance related problems, including lateness, or there are issues affecting your child that make them reluctant to come to school, please contact us so that we can support you with this.

3. The Legal position in relation to absence during term time

On 1 September 2013 an amendment was made to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which states that *headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances*.

Parents/carers who need to request leave of absence for their child/ren during term time for exceptional circumstances must send a written request or email to Mrs Taylor the Headteacher.