



Attendance Policy

September 2023

Our Aim:

Our attendance policy aims to support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality; ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning; enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school; make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities; ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets.

Being at school

School education lays some of the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Chandag Primary School is committed to providing high quality, inclusive learning opportunities for all children. We believe that full attendance and punctuality is vital in children reaching their full potential. We are committed to identifying and addressing any problems that impede full attendance as quickly as possible. We look to reduce absence and in particular persistent absence. We promote excellent attendance and punctuality to the children in our care and we work alongside our families supporting them to ensure they fulfil their legal responsibility to their child's attendance in school. By choosing Chandag Primary School parents agree to comply with the guidance set out in this policy.

Legislation and Guidance

All children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16 years old) are required to receive an education. It is a parent/carer's legal responsibility to ensure that their child has an education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have.

Compulsory school age is between 5 and 16, during the time that a child attends Chandag Primary School parents are expected to comply with the guidance set out in this Attendance Policy.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Absence will only be authorised if it is unavoidable, such as illness or a medical appointment which cannot be made outside of school time. In these circumstances, proof such as a hospital letter or prescription may be requested. If no reason is given for an absence, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the school of any absences and give valid reasons for them. Failure to report absences within the guidelines set out in this policy will automatically result in that absence being recorded in the register as unauthorised. This may result in further action being taken if we are not informed of the whereabouts of the child and could possibly result in a missing child referral.

Term Time Leave of Absence Requests

The Head Teacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head Teacher's discretion and this decision is final (i.e. it is not possible to appeal the decision taken with the Governing Body).

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time and the judgement of the Supreme Court in the case of R v Platt [2017] asserts that even one day of missed school could be an infraction of the law.

In line with the Department of Education regulations, which came into effect in September 2013, the Head Teacher may only grant a leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances

Absences from school for the purposes of a term-time holiday will not be authorised unless there are 'exceptional circumstances' which are considered on a case by case basis. It is a legal requirement that parents/carers obtain the permission of the Head Teacher before removing their child from school. If a parent/carer wishes to make an application for a termtime absence, this must be done in advance of the absence by the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. This request must be made in writing by completing a [Leave Of Absence Form](#) which can be obtained from the school office or available to download from the school website via the Office section. This must be then handed in to the office for the headteacher to review **at least two weeks** in advance.

The headteacher (or a representative of the Head Teacher will formally reply to any applications within **7 working days** upon receiving this. This reply will explain whether the absence is authorised or not and explain any action needed. Ultimately the Head Teacher is within their rights to decline an application and refuse permission for parents/carers to take their children out of school during term time. Such a decision will have been made in the best interest of the child's educational progress and attainment and with due regard to their previous attendance record. If the child is subsequently taken out of school this absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. The Headteacher's decision is final and there is no right of appeal with the decisions taken.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices may be issued to parents/carers by BANES Council, on behalf of the school, for any **unauthorised absences of 10 or more sessions (5 or more days) in any 100 day period**, including, but not limited to, absences for term-time holidays, sporadic unauthorised absences or illness where supporting medical evidence has been requested by the school but not supplied by the parent/carers.

If the school becomes concerned about unexplained absence at any point then a referral to Children Services, Attendance and Welfare and/or the Police may be made. Therefore, it is always important to maintain contact when children are absent.

The amount of a Penalty Notice is £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per parent/carer per child if paid between 22 and 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid the parent/carer may be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. Any parents/carers with parental responsibility, even if they are currently living at a different address, may also be liable.

Penalty Notices should also be considered with reference to:

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007 Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 Children Missing Education (CME)

Children are classed as missing education when they are not registered at a school or receiving suitable provision elsewhere and are of compulsory school age.

To avoid children becoming CME, it is important that they are placed on and off a school roll according to Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. It is vital that schools and local authorities work together to safeguard children and ensure that they receive their educational entitlement.

At Chandag Primary School, we work closely with the Local Authority and inform them when we have concerns over a child missing education.

Expectations of all parents/carers:

- Ensure the regular school attendance of their child and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school daily of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Notify school promptly by phone **by 8.30 for both Infants and Junior School** on the day, or in advance, when their child is absent from school **on 0117 986 3614**
- Parents must continue to call the school daily unless otherwise informed.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- Plan holidays outside of term time.

Expectations of the school; Class Teacher, Attendance Team, Headteacher:

Class Teacher

- Provide a welcoming and safe learning environment
- Record attendance on a daily basis using the correct attendance code list of AM and PM attendance and punctuality at the start of each session and submit this information to the school office.
- Report any concerns relating to attendance to the headteacher
- Discuss attendance with parents/carers during parents' evening appointments

Attendance Team

- Encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- Monitor and track attendance and lateness data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Support children and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance - where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support children and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.
- Contact parents to obtain explanation when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence – through first day calling by the office.
- Follow up all unexplained absences and ensure any safeguarding action is taken if necessary.
- Regularly inform parents of the percentage of attendance of all pupils.
- Make enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- Report concerns about attendance/absence (inc. persistent absence) to the Head Teacher
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues, supporting each family and their individual needs
- Act to address persistent absences (below 90%)
- Work with local authority education welfare officers & attendance support services to tackle persistent absence
- Review leave of absence requests, consulting with the head teacher where necessary.
- When in agreement with the Head Teacher, issue fixed-penalty notices

Attendance data will be collected and used to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absence may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

Headteacher

- Ensure the effective implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitor school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Review leave of absence requests, in consultation with the Attendance, when required, and authorise the issuing of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Maintaining oversight/authorisation of the removal from roll for any pupils (inc. elective home education requests) and part time timetable arrangements

Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.

Registers, Register Codes, Punctuality and Lateness

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All children (regardless of their age) must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register. The admission register will contain specific personal details of every child in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended.

Attendance is recorded using a code e.g.		
P present in the morning	P present in the afternoon	L late before the register closes
V educational visit	M medical	I illness
U late after register closes	O unauthorised absence and illness	C authorised lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes loss of learning to that individual's learning and disruption to the other children in the class.

Arrival at school 8.35-8.45am

Registration 8.45am

Arrival after 8.50am marked as late (L)

Arrival after 9.00am marked as unauthorised (U)

Where persistent lateness or absence concerns or patterns are spotted, parents/carers will be contacted and requested to attend a meeting to with a member of the Attendance Team to ascertain, support, agree strategies and devise an action plan and parent contract to improve this. Where there is no improvement, the case will be escalated to the Headteacher and where necessary further action will be taken with referrals to education welfare/support services following the school's lawful obligation. Where there is no alternative legal sanctions may be pursued.

Attendance and punctuality is vital. We know that attendance of less than **95% (i.e. absences of 9.5 days or more out of the 190 pupil days in the school year) has been shown to compromise pupil attainment. At 90% attendance pupils miss the equivalent of almost 4 weeks education (19 days)** and only 10% of pupils who are persistently absent from school achieve expected levels at GCSE. We do not want children to get to this point.

Strategies used to Promote Attendance and Punctuality at Chandag Primary School

We use a variety of strategies to maximise attendance and punctuality including:

- Attendance is given a high profile across the whole school through assemblies and newsletters.
- Acknowledgement of children who have 100% attendance during the year.
- All children praised for arriving at school punctually through meet and greet at the door in the morning.

Home Schooling

If a parent/carer chooses to home educate their child, and effectively remove them from roll at Chandag Primary School, they must put this in writing. Parents/Carers should ensure their child still attends school until a removal from roll date has been agreed, in writing, with the Head Teacher.

Practices in place in order to safeguard children from becoming Children Missing Education:

- Pupils are entered onto the admission register at the beginning of the first day that child is due to attend. If the child fails to attend then enquiries will be made to establish their whereabouts and BANES Council will be notified. If a place is enquired about for a child who is not currently on roll at Chandag Primary School, and a place is not available, the school will notify BANES Council.
- If a pupil does not return to school for ten days after an authorised leave of absence, or is absent without authorisation for twenty days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register. This can only be done if the school and Banes have made reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child.
- If a child is temporarily suspended from school for more than five consecutive days, the school will arrange suitable alternative full-time education. This must begin no later than the sixth day of suspension. For permanent exclusions, the Local Authority will provide alternative education.
- Attendance will be monitored through our daily registers and any unexplained absences will be investigated as part of our safeguarding duty.
- The school will notify BANES when a pupil's name is removed from the school admission register in-year.
- The school will notify BANES within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register in-year.
- If a child is not able to attend school, due to being incapacitated, chronically poorly or for any other long-term medical condition, the school will agree appropriate provision with the parent/carer and any other professionals involved. This could include a range of activities such as remote education provided by Chandag Primary School alongside any other provision allocated such as hospital education or tutoring.

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or as the DfE is updated, and as a minimum every three years in line with the Policy Review Schedule.

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy