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# ATTENDANCE POLICY

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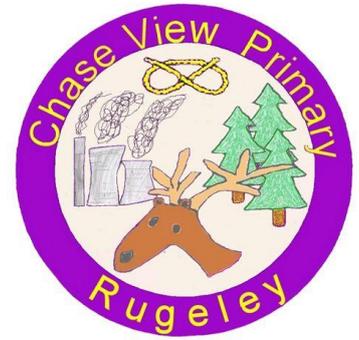
Chase View Community  
Primary School

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Adopted Sep 2019  
Review Sep 2021

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Chase View Primary School, Rugeley  
Attendance Policy



## Principles

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. This policy has been approved by the school governors and reflects the LA's code of practice.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All children should be at school, on time ready for registration at 8.35am, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

The attendance and behaviour policy must include procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.**

**Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:**

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late (9.15am) to get a mark

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

### **Procedures**

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

If a child is absent from school their parents or guardians should contact school before 9.00a.m, with an explanation of absence. This may be done via telephone, personal visit or written message. If no message is forthcoming by 9.15 a.m., school will contact home either by telephone or via the school's texting service.

Parents who wish to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time must seek an authorisation form from the school office (appendix1). School will respond to the application by sending a standard letter giving approval (appendix 2) or disapproval and warning of consequences (appendix 3). The criteria used to approve or disapprove a request for absence are shown in appendix 4.

Parents and pupils have been consulted on the contents of this policy. The Headteacher, or staff delegated by him / her will be responsible for analysis of attendance data and for the administration of procedures deemed necessary following any unusual trends in attendance. If possible data should be used in a positive way to help form class or whole school targets. Wherever possible positive action will be taken by the school to improve a pupil's attendance and investigate and address any underlying cause of problems before considering whether to make a referral to Local Authority.

When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 90% in any term without good reason, a referral to the EWS (Education Welfare Service) can be made by the school. We will also require documentation (in the form of an appointment card, note or prescribed medication for example), from a GP if your child has to see a doctor for any illness requiring time away from school or

Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444. Information for parents regarding Education Penalty Notices is to be found in appendix 5.

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

### **Arriving Late**

Any child that is not in school by 8.45am (once gates are closed), will have an authorised late mark (L), if due to a medical appointment; evidence of this will be required. After 9.15am (once registers have closed), this will be marked as an **un-authorised** late (U), this affects a child's percentage attendance figure.

### **Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives**

At Chase View, weekly attendance is treated in a positive manner on a weekly basis. In each Key Stage there is a reward for the class with the highest attendance. This is in the shape of a cuddly dog which becomes the property of the winning class for a week.

### **Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

Communications relating to absence from school should be to the school office 01889 256125 or via email at [office@chaseview.staffs.co.uk](mailto:office@chaseview.staffs.co.uk) where the school office staff will record reasons for absence. The school office will inform the headteacher of any unusual absences or persistent lateness. The headteacher will then decide on a course of action which would normally begin with parental contact but may result in contacting the EWO. Any requests for special absence should be made directly to the headteacher.

School staff are encouraged to be aware of and report to the headteacher, any patterns of absence which may link to behaviour issues in school and, if known, at home.

### **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.



**Appendix 1**

To: The Head Teacher of: **Chase View Community Primary School** Date.....

1. I request consideration for leave of absence from school during term time for:

my child (full name) .....Class .....

for the period from (date) ..... to (date) .....

2. The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are: -

3. ....

4. ....

5. ....

6. Siblings in other classes also requesting leave:

7. Child's Full Name .....Class.....

8. Child's Full Name .....Class.....

(Signature of 1<sup>st</sup> parent/carer(s)..... Print Name.....

(Signature of 2<sup>nd</sup> parent/carer(s) ..... Print Name.....

**Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.**

**For Office Use Only**

Current Attendance.....% Last Year's Attendance.....%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time ..... (This academic year)

**Agreed/Not Agreed**

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Reason to decline request : .....

Signed .....Head teacher Date .....

Notification of decision: Date letter sent to parent/carer.....

## Appendix 2

Chase View Primary School,  
Hillary Crest,  
Pear Tree Estate,  
Rugeley,  
Staffs  
WS15 1NE

Date:

Dear

Thank you for your recent holiday request form.

I am able to confirm that on this occasion I am able to authorise your child's leave of absence from *date to date*, for the purpose of a family holiday.

Requests for holiday leave are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered *name of pupil* overall level of attendance, academic attainment and the impact any leave may have on public examinations and tests (see attached form).

Please contact me to discuss a possible study pack or project outline that *child's name* can complete whilst away. I hope that you have a good holiday and that *name of pupil* finds it an interesting and stimulating experience.

Yours sincerely  
Headteacher

### Appendix 3

Chase View Primary School,  
Hillary Crest,  
Pear Tree Estate,  
Rugeley,  
Staffs  
WS15 1NE

Date:

Dear

Thank you for your recent holiday request form.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence from *date* to *date*, for the purpose of a family holiday.

I have no wish to deprive families of a well earned family holiday but my first concern has to be the educational development of *pupil name*. Requests for holiday leave are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered *name of pupil* overall level of attendance, academic attainment and the impact any leave may have on public examinations and tests (please see attached form).

If you decide to go ahead with your proposed holiday, *pupil name* absences will be marked as unauthorised. I should inform you that unauthorised absences are referred to the Local Authority who may under certain circumstance consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice or other legal action in relation to unauthorised absences.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please feel free to make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher  
LA Parents Leaflet - Penalty Notices

## Appendix 4

# Education Penalty Notices

## Information for Parents

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children go to school regularly. The local authority can now issue Penalty Notices if a parent fails to make sure that their children receive the education they deserve. This leaflet tells you about these notices.

### School Attendance and the Law

Any absence from school is a cause for concern. Only by attending every day will your child have the best chance to get the most from their education.

The headteacher at your child's school must decide whether to authorise an absence. That is to agree that there was a legitimate reason for your child not to be in school.

There are only four legitimate reasons for absence:

- Religious observance
- Illness of the child
- The death of a close family member
- An urgent medical or dental appointment

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) can take legal action against you if you fail to make sure that your children go to school regularly and there is no legitimate reason for the absence. This action might take one of two forms:

- The issuing of a Penalty Notice
- Prosecution in the local Magistrates Court

This information is about Penalty Notices and how the EWS will issue them.

### What they are

Penalty Notices are fines, issued by Staffordshire EWS, for a child's unauthorised absence from school.

The service will always consider legal action when there is no legitimate reason for absence.

## How they will be issued

Notices will be issued by post. They will not be issued during a Truancy Sweep or as part of a meeting with parents.



This graph shows the effect of missing time from school over a year. Every school session is important if your child is not going to fall behind.

The EWS will not take legal action if previously poor attendance is now improving.

Instead they'll monitor the case and support the pupil. If attendance doesn't improve, or if absences begin to increase the EWS will re-assess the case to see if legal action is needed.

## Appendix 5

### Penalty Notices

#### What they mean

Parents who are subject to a penalty notice have 3 choices:

Pay the fine early, within 21 days, and it is £60

Pay within 28 days and the fine is £120.

Don't pay the fine. In this case the Notice will be withdrawn and Magistrates Court proceedings will start. This could result in a fine of up to £1000 for each child whose attendance is causing concern and for each parent involved in the prosecution.

#### Further information

If you would like further information about Penalty Notices please contact your district Education Welfare Team:

If you have concerns about your child's education you should, initially, discuss these with school.

District	Telephone
Stafford and South Staffordshire	01785 356949
Lichfield and Cannock	01543 512050
East Staffordshire and Tamworth	01283 239755
Newcastle and Leek Moorlands	01782 297524