



Attendance Policy

Date of Policy: September 2023

Policy Review date: Summer term 2026

JMiles

Signed:

Headteacher: Julie Miles

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Signed:

Chair of Governors: Dan Johnston

Equality Statement

In our school, we are committed to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity for all those with 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010, in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, maternity and pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual identity and marriage and civil partnership status. We will endeavour to foster good relations between all.

(Our full Equality Statement can be found on the school website)

Clapham Terrace Community Primary School and Nursery

Attendance Policy

This policy reflects the DfE guidelines, which came into force September 2013, which state:

‘Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances’

Clapham Terrace Primary School would interpret “exceptional” in this context as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, outweighing the loss of teaching time. The interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another but, **normally; requests for authorised absence will be refused.**

The process involved within this policy is also applicable to children registered in our Nursery.

Although pupils are not required by law to attend it is seen as good practice that parents follow the same procedures in preparation for full time education.

Clapham Terrace Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all children. We believe if that children are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all children. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate good attendance through rewarding outstanding attendance. Children attending less than this will only be considered for a reward if absences are supported by relevant religious or medical evidence. Attendance is a critical factor in a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage excellent attendance for all our children.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents or carers, and children, the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is a concern about attendance.

If there are problems, which affect a child’s attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and or carers, and children, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the child to full time attendance at all times.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:-

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) ‘Working together to improve school attendance’
- DfE (2022) ‘Keeping Children safe in Education 2022’
- DfE (2016) ‘Children missing education’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:-

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

Objectives

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To monitor attendance and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism.
- To acknowledge and celebrate a successful record of attendance.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for those associated with the school, including parents or carers, children, teachers and governors.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents or carers and children.
- To work effectively with other services and agencies to support these objectives.
- To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.

Information

This outlines the policy information operated by the school, which will be considered when dealing with attendance and punctuality issues:

- We have clear start and finish times for registration: the school opens at 8.45am; the school day starts at 8.55am and registration closes at 9.05am.
- We have guidance for staff on the accurate completion of registers.
- We emphasise the importance of punctuality and responding to lateness; if a child arrives at school after 9.05am they will be marked late; less than 90% punctuality will be followed up and any patterns in absences e.g. regular Mondays or Fridays.
- There will be daily contact between parents or carers and school when a child is absent
- On the First Day of Absence, parents/carers are required to contact the school office before 9.15am via the absence line and leave a message with the reason for the absence from school. A specific reason should be stated.
- In line with the Health Protection Agency guidelines, a period of 48 hours absence is required for any pupil with neuro virus symptoms (sickness and diarrhoea and a temperature); such absence due to illness is authorised.
- Once your child has recovered, it is important that they return to school as soon as possible to ensure they do not miss too much teaching, even if this means they return on the last day of the week or term.
- We are able to administer prescribed medication during school hours, providing you have completed a medical form and the medicine has been pre-measured.
- The school can provide information on illnesses that require time off from school and the recommended length of time your child is likely to be absent.
- Illnesses, which last longer than 2 days and/or coincide with the start/end of term, may require medical evidence in order for the absence to be authorised.
- If your child's attendance falls to a level that is likely to adversely affect their long term educational success, the Head Teacher will discuss this with you
- We give clear guidance to parents or carers that Head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.
- We have clear referral routes, with designated staff roles and responsibilities for pupils with emerging attendance problems. Parents/carers of children with attendance below 90% will be contacted.
- We monitor progress towards attendance targets.
- We evaluate the impact of this Attendance Policy and will plan any improvements needed in our practice in the Schools Development Plan (SDP).
- We include attendance information in school documentation, e.g. the prospectus, reports, newsletters, Home School Agreements.
- Annual reports to parents/carers include a record of their child's attendance.

- The Head teacher's termly report to the Governing Body records the attendance figures for the academic year to date.

The minimum expected attendance over any school year is 95%.

Practice

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately.
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers.
- Regularly analysing attendance data.
- Ensuring prompt follow up action in cases of non-attendance and lateness.
- Reporting missing children to the Local Authority.
- The school absence line is checked daily and parents are contacted if no message has been received explaining the child's absence for that day.
- Monthly report are generated highlighting any children who have dropped below 95% attendance, letters are sent to these families and meetings are arranged to discuss how the school can support if attendance doesn't improve and continues to fall.
- Attendance Action Plans are put in place if no improvement is made following the early support offered through the meetings.

Attendance

Persistent, severe or unexplained absence can be classed as unauthorised absence and may be referred to the Local Authority.

Morning registration is from 8:45am to 9:15am arrival after this time will be marked as unauthorised (unless attending a medical appointment for which proof has been provided).

Afternoon registration runs from 1:15pm to 1:30pm arrival after this time will be marked as unauthorised (unless attending a medical appointment for which proof has been provided).

If you do need to collect your child early from school in a matter of emergency, please call the school office. On collection, the pupil must be signed out at the front office.

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the importance of this issue in raising standards and improving school effectiveness. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole school.

There are 13 weeks of school holidays across the year and 190 days of school

Days off	What this means in %	What attendance figures this will be
5 days	2.6%	94.7%
10 days	5.3%	97.4%
15 days	7.9%	92.1%

Punctuality

Punctuality is also a legal requirement for school pupils. School starts at 8:55 am and finishes at 3:15 pm (please note that children will be able to enter school from 8:45am and should go straight to their classrooms).

If your child arrives later than 8:55am, they **MUST** be brought to the school office and signed in by a parent/carer.

Being on time is very important. Many schools concentrate on the key skills such as literacy and numeracy at the beginning of school day and children who arrive late can miss important learning. They may also miss important information about what is happening during the school day, which can leave them confused and distressed when they do not know what is going on. It can also cause disruption for the rest of the class.

Persistent Absence / Lateness

We expect all our pupils to achieve a minimum 95% attendance across a school year and to arrive on school premises in time.

- Attendance falls below 95% (or there have been 5 occasions of late arrival or unexplained absence) a discussion with the parent/carer will take place to establish why this has and explore if any support is required.
- Attendance continues to fall to below 95% or punctuality fails to improve the Parent/Carer will be requested to meet with the Inclusion manager and a 6-week Attendance Monitoring period may be set.
- Attendance/Punctuality fails to improve during Monitoring. The Parent/Carer will be invited in for an Attendance Panel Meeting. This is normally with at least two of the following: Head Teacher, Inclusion Manager or pastoral support Assistant or School Governor. A second 6-week monitoring period will then be set.
- Attendance/Punctuality fails to improve **OR** falls below 85% a referral may be made to the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS). They will contact families to find out why absence is high and to offer support and guidance with any issues that are preventing full attendance.

If absence/lateness persist WAS have the responsibility to enforce attendance through legal interventions. This may take the form of Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) and/or prosecution. Further information and guidance on any of the above areas can be obtained from:

- School
- Warwickshire Attendance Service
- Referring to The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013.
- www.dfes.gov.uk/school-attendance/legislation

Any unauthorised absence is damaging to a child's education as well as reflecting badly on the school. It also gives children the wrong message about the importance of education, which may lead to problems later in their schooling. Good attendance and punctuality are important values for later life.

Notes for parent's or carers completing an application for Leave of Absence during term time, in exceptional circumstances only. (See form at Appendix B)

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents or carers) as either *authorised* or *unauthorised*. The 2013 DfE amendments make it clear that:

'Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'

Any application of leave during term time must be made at least 3 weeks in advance.

1. Illness – If a child is, absent because of illness the absence is **authorised** providing that it is reported to the school on each day of the sickness by telephone, in person or in writing by the parents or carers. Extended illness may need to be evidenced with doctor's notes.
2. Medical and dental appointments: as far as possible, appointments should be made out of school hours. If a medical or dental appointment has to be made during the school day, the school must be informed beforehand stating the time of appointment in order that the absence can be **authorised**. Appointments should be made to miss as little of school as a possible. All children must be signed out before they leave school to attend the appointment and signed in when they return.
3. Parents or carers do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

4. Family bereavements, critical operations, hospital visits: the school recognises that the death or serious illness of a family member can be a particularly traumatic event and the school has the discretion to **authorise** such an absence. *A Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstance form must be completed and supported by the any relevant supporting documents.*
5. Days of religious observance: absence due to participation in a day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or carers belongs is **authorised** by the school. A minimum of 3 weeks advance notice is required. ***A Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances form must be completed and returned to the office, and supported by any relevant supporting documents.***
6. Absences for social occasions such a birthday, weddings and family outings will not normally be authorised by the school and would therefore be *unauthorised* absence, *unless supported by evidence, which highlights the unique nature of the event.* ***A Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances form must be completed and returned to the office.***
7. Family holidays: **family holidays during term time will not be authorised.**

Applications for leave of absence, which are made in advance and refused, will result in the absence being unauthorised. Unauthorised absence may result in action against the parent or carer, either by a fixed penalty notice or if there is a failure to pay then followed through by the courts.

Unauthorised Absence

Any absence that is either not explained by a parent or is not agreed by the school will be counted as unauthorised. Schools are required by law to report their attendance levels to both the Local Authority and the relevant Government department.

Children missing in Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor unauthorised absence, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions.

We follow the DFE legal requirements for schools in respect of recording and reporting of children who leave school without any known destination. Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence (or sooner if there is cause for concern) and all reasonable steps have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to Warwickshire County Council's Missing in Education (CME) service. The Children missing in Education Service can be contacted on 01926 736323 or by email to cme@warwickshire.gov.uk

Reasonable steps include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts.
- Letters home (including recorded delivery).
- Possible home visits where safe to do so.
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc., through school contacts.
- Enquiries to other services known to be involved with the pupil or family.

All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the pupil's file. Upon receipt of a referral from the school, the CME Service will then continue to attempt to track the child, for at least a further 10 days, using access to additional contacts/services, e.g. housing.

If this also fails to establish the pupil's whereabouts, the school will be informed by email and may then, but not before, remove the pupil from roll and place the child's name on the School-to-School database, entering XXXXXXXX in the box for destination. This will place the pupil on the list of missing from Education.

Deletions from roll agreed with CME Service will normally be backdated to the first day of absence.

If CME Service is able to contact the pupil and his or her parents, arrangements will be made with the school and family for a return to education, including re-integration programme where necessary.

If the pupil has registered at another school, the school will delete the child's name from our roll and transfer the child's educational records to the new school in the normal way. Any child protection records will be transferred separately and securely for the attention of the DSL in the new school and a receipt secured.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important to set realistic attendance targets; these may be set in consultation with the Local Authority or with the Governing Body. The school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process. Our school target for school attendance is currently 96%. The Governor responsible for overseeing attendance is Andy Brettell.

When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Patterns and trends in the school's attendance and children's punctuality are improving
- Parental response to children's absence has improved
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance by celebrating good attendance within the school, governing body and the local community
- Children and parents or carers are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance, and are aware of the attendance procedures operating within school
- Parents or carers and governors are made aware of the current law on attendance
- Attendance issues have been included in topics in school assemblies or PSHE lessons

The Curriculum and Standards Committee of the Governing Body will review this policy every three years, or earlier, if necessary, or if there are changes to attendance guidelines.

Appendix A (extract from Warwickshire Attendance Services guidelines)

Leave of Absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. I.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Appendix B

Warwickshire County Council Communities Directorate

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: _____ Form Group: _____

First Date of Proposed Absence: _____ Last date of Proposed Absence: _____

Expected date of return to school: _____

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (they can only be exceptional circumstances) (see overleaf before completing)

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.....
.....

Total Days Requested On This Occasion

(For siblings) I have also applied to _____ School/Academy for leave of absence for _____ (Insert child/children's name)

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: _____ Date received by school: _____

1st date of absence requested: _____ Last date of absence requested: _____

Expected date of return to school: _____

Absence Authorised: Yes/No

The reasons for this decision are: _____

- LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: _____ Date: _____

- Copy of this completed section must be sent back to parent with letter

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:

1. Head Teachers shall not grant any leave of absence during term time unless:
A) An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides

AND
B) They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

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- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
 - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
 - Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
 - Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.
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Parents:

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will recorded as unauthorised.
3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.