

**Canterbury City and Country  
Local Childrens Service  
Partnership (LCSP)**

**Attendance policy**

**April 09**

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## **1. Purpose of the guidance**

To provide:

1. A clear and uniform attendance policy will be beneficial to both users and providers.
2. It is important to acknowledge that schools that achieve high levels of attendance will be more able to ensure that their pupils will reach their true academic potential.
3. To improve overall attendance, and reduce unauthorised absences.
4. To work within a framework, with defined roles and responsibilities, and aim to improve attendance.
5. To support, advise and give guidance to parents and pupils, with positive and consistent communication between home and school.
6. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions which relate to attendance.
7. To work effectively with other agencies, in particular the Attendance and Behaviour Service (ABS) to promote good attendance.

**The responsibility for ensuring that children attend school regularly and punctually rests with parents/carers. This fact must be emphasised and acknowledged.**

## **2. Whole School approach to Attendance**

This means:

1. The school recognises that regular attendance is vital.
2. The school will work to ensure maximum attendance by all their pupils.
3. The school will work to identify any problems that may impede full attendance, and address these issues.
4. The school will work in close collaboration with parents to achieve their aim of 100% attendance.
5. The school will ensure that all parents are aware of and understand this policy.
6. The school will ensure that parents are aware, that it is ultimately their responsibility to ensure their children attend, as laid down by statutory guidelines. In the case of those in KS1 & 2 - 95%, at KS3 & 4 - 92%.
7. The school will recognise that pupils are individuals and work with them to achieve good attendance.
8. School will operate a system of rewards for those who achieve high levels of attendance.
9. The School will address attendance issues with the aim of achieving both national and county targets.

## **3. Implementation**

### **3.1 Registration**

1. Class Teacher will accurately register pupils, twice a day. This will occur before the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.
2. Late attendance. **Note:** pupils who arrive after the register has been taken but before the register has been closed, the register should be marked L. Where

3. Registers can be left open for a maximum period of 30 minutes after the register has first been taken. Each school can adjust as appropriate, however parent/carers must be aware of the time the register closes.
4. Where a child is not present for registration, the parent/carer should inform the School why the child is not attending. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the school. Please note where no contact is made the absence will automatically be marked as unauthorised, N code, must be used.
5. The School will attempt to contact parent/carers on the first day of a pupil's absence. Where the absence continues and there continues to be no contact, the school will write to the parents requesting an immediate response, and identify the implications of continued non-attendance. After 20 unauthorised sessions the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) should be contacted. Should the School have any concerns with regard to the child's safety, then ABS, Social Services or The Police maybe informed at any stage of the absence.
6. Any referral to the ABS should be accompanied with all relevant information, and evidence of previous work carried out by the School to achieve improved attendance.
7. Where reasons are provided for absence, it is important to note that the School continues to have the right to authorise the absence and not the parent/carer.
8. Letters of explanation are to be made within 10 school days of the absence. Where this does not occur or the reason provided is considered to be unsatisfactory then the absence will be marked as unauthorised, using the O code.

### **3.2. Holidays**

1. Parents are asked to support their child's school with its aims and not take children away during school term time. It should be noted that leave during term time is granted only in extenuating circumstances.

E.g. Rostered leave of a family member, (where leave cannot be taken outside School holidays) supported with written evidence from employer.

2. . If there is a request for authorised leave the Canterbury City and Country request for authorised leave form (appendix 1) should be completed and presented to the Head teacher. Upon receipt of this form the head teacher will make a decision based on the possible impact that this time out will have on the child's education.

Absence will be coded according to DCSF Absence and Attendance Codes:

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| E.g. | C | Authorised other circumstances<br>(Special occasions at the discretion of the school) |
|      | I | Illness<br>(Not medical or dental appointment)  |

- M Medical Appointment  
(Medical or Dental appointment)
  
- P Approved Sporting Activity  
(The pupil is participating in or attending an approved sporting activity).
  
- T Traveller Absence  
(Traveller child when the family is traveling)

*For full Coding see (Appendix Absence and Attendance Codes).*

Absences will not be authorised during preparation for and administration of examinations, including SATs.

### **3.3 Sanctions available to School where attendance does not improve**

The below should only be put into operation where the absences are unauthorised.

1. Where 10 unauthorised sessions occur within a school term (old term); the school can apply to the Local Authority for the issuing of **a Penalty Notice**. Such an application should be made in consultation with the EWO. (Appendix: Penalty Notices).
2. Referral can be made to EWO, where legal sanctions maybe applied, in the usual manner.

The offence of non-school attendance is absolute, and the legal requirement regarding evidence is simply that the child did not attend. However, there are four statutory defences as defined under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act. (Appendix: Statutory Defences).

### **3.4 The Keeping of Registers**

School will abide by the regulations as identified by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Document can be viewed on [www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/) or on [www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance). The regulations held within this document take effect from September 2006. (Appendix Keeping Pupil Registers).

1. All schools must keep both an Attendance and Admission Registers. Admission Register will contain valuable information, with regard to each pupil in particular, emergency contact details for pupils. Parents/carers must provide correct details to school and provide updated information as required. The register must be maintained and stored securely.
2. Attendance Register is a vital tool in enabling schools to assess poor attendance and absence patterns. As previously stated there is strong statistical link between attendance and achievement.
3. Attendance Registration should be completed using relevant coding. (Appendix Absence and Attendance Codes).

**IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE REGISTER IS KEPT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATUTORY REGULATIONS. THE REGISTER MAY BE REQUIRED AS EVIDENCE WHERE PROSECUTION OCCURS.**

#### **4 Role of the Education Welfare Officer**

1. The EWO will visit the school, at least once a term (6 x a year). It may be necessary to visit on a weekly basis, dependent on the requirement of the school.
2. The EWO will look at those pupils who have unauthorised absences or where a pupil's level of attendance falls below 90%. The EWO work is dependent on the accuracy information supplied by the school.
3. Referrals will be made using Referral form ABS1 (Appendix: Document 2), EWO will not accept referrals unless there are unauthorised absences.
4. It is imperative that the school provides all relevant information, most importantly with regard to Health and Safety issues.
5. EWO works in a multi-agency environment, with Social Services, The School Nurse Service, CAMHS (Children, Adolescence and Mental Health Services) and other agencies where appropriate. EWO now has available the possible use of Family Group Conferencing to improve attendance. EWO will be required to produce documentation required for prosecution.
6. EWO acts in a monitoring capacity for the issuing of Penalty Notices.
7. The EWO role involves monitoring, and strategy building with both school and parents.
8. The EWO work is based ultimately on a strong collaborative relationship with the school.



## Request for authorised leave during school term time

Childs Name.....

Dates .....

Reason for request.....  
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Signed by Parent/guardian

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Date of request .....

Authorised by Headteacher                      YES / NO

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