

# Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery Unit

## Attendance Policy



*Reviewed by*                      *Colin Jeffery February 2020*

*Ratified by*                      *21<sup>st</sup> June 2022*  
*Curriculum*  
*Committee*

*Next review*                      *June 2025*

# Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery Unit

## Attendance Policy

### Statement of Intent

Chase Lane Primary School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality in order for them to:

- make the most of the educational opportunities that are available to them;
- create and maintain good relationships with pupils and adults within the school community; and
- learn good attendance and punctuality habits for their success in future education and workplace environments.

### Nursery Attendance

Regular Nursery attendance promotes a positive attitude to learning and allows your child to maximise their engagement in the wide range of learning opportunities available to them. Whilst attendance is non-statutory, the 15-hour funding provided by the Government for each child has to be accounted for – sporadic or prolonged absence will be questioned by the Local Authority and could result in a place being withdrawn.

### Key members of staff

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for school attendance.

The school's Attendance Officer maintains all records and is the first point of contact for attendance related issues.

The school also has a designated Education Welfare Officer who visits the school regularly and who also conducts home visits.

### Responsibilities

#### School Responsibility

Chase Lane Primary School and Nursery expects pupils to attend school regularly and to arrive on time in a fit condition to learn.

The school will recognise external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents/carers, the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and other relevant services to deal with any issues that arise.

We will maintain accurate registers of pupil attendance and will contact parents if their child is absent via text or phone call.

Parents will be kept fully informed of their child's attendance and punctuality record.

We will ensure that school attendance figures are correct for Local Authority and Government reporting.

The School will encourage and value high attendance and punctuality rates.

#### Pupil Responsibility

Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly (at least 96%) and on time.

### Parents/Carers Responsibility

It is the parent's/carer's legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives a full time education and attends school regularly and punctually in accordance with the Home/School Agreement. The minimum attendance level for children registered at this school is 96% which is the National target. You will be notified by way of a registration certificate sent home should your child's attendance drop below this level.

Parents/Carers are responsible for immediately informing the school office of the reason for any absence either by telephone or email [absence@clpwaltham.org.uk](mailto:absence@clpwaltham.org.uk) . Parents must contact the school on the first morning of any absence. The school has an absence line where you are able to leave a message – the number is 0208 529 6827 Option 1. Please speak clearly and leave your child's name, class and the reason for absence.

Parents/Carers will not arrange family holidays during term time and failure to follow this could lead to a fine from the local authority.

Parents/Carers must talk to the school if they are concerned that their child may be reluctant to attend.

Parents/Carers must be aware of letters from school which their child brings home.

For health & safety purposes parents/carers must inform the school immediately of any change of address or contact telephone number.

### **School Procedures**

#### Registration requirements

School registers are legal documents and are required to be taken at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

The parent of a child who is persistently absent or persistently late after the registers have closed can be prosecuted under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act and the register would act as the main source of evidence in court.

Children who arrive to school after 9.30am will be marked in the register with a U code which is an unauthorised late code and will statistically reflect as an absence even though we know that the child is in school.

If the school has to evacuate the building, the attendance register enables staff to account for the children present that day.

#### Registration process

The Nursery sessions start at:  
8.55am for morning children, and  
12.25am for afternoon children.

Children are welcomed into school from 8.45am when the bell rings and are encouraged to arrive at this time.

School gates close at 8.55am and learning begins.

Children who arrive after the gates are closed need to go to the main reception and sign in using the school signing in system 'InVentry'. The office will ask for an

explanation of lateness. However, the register is not closed until 9.05am. It needs to be noted that if a child arrives between 8.55am and 9.05am more than 10 times it will be considered a late issue. The school must ensure every child is recorded in case of an emergency evacuation.

The registers are called again after the lunchtime break.

If a pupil does not attend an afternoon session, he/she must be signed out at reception via the InVentry system, providing a reason for non-attendance.

### **Types of Absence**

All absences must be explained by a parent/carer. The school will then decide whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. A letter from home explaining an absence will not necessarily mean the absence will be authorised by the school. If a child is absent from school through illness for a period of 10 absences (5 days) either individual or consecutive days, medical evidence may be requested to be produced to support the absence immediately upon their return. Failure to produce this evidence will result in the child's absence being coded as unauthorised. For your information I list below examples of evidence that will be acceptable:

A doctor's appointment card;  
A dentist's appointment card;  
A hospital admission letter;  
A hospital discharge letter and  
Medication prescribed – please bring into school the prescription or empty packets/bottles which can then be photocopied.

### **Authorised Absences**

Absence from school may be authorised if it is for one of the following reasons:

- Illness:
  - \* Vomiting –*keep your child at home for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness/diarrhoea if he/she is suffering with sickness and diarrhoea associated with a virus/bug;*
  - \* Headlice – *children can come to school after treatment;*
  - \* Conjunctivitis – *children can come to school after treatment; and*
  - \* Periods of absence of 5 days or more where medical evidence has been provided.
- Medical/Dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time (please make routine appointments outside of school hours);
- Religious holidays that are observed in the UK;
- Exceptional family circumstances such as a bereavement/birth of sibling;
- Weddings at home 1 day and abroad 3 days;
- Interview or entrance exams for new schools;
- Participation in a sporting event; and
- Commercial/photographic work as per The Children (Performance) Regulations 1968.

### **Unauthorised Absences**

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- Shopping;
- Birthdays;
- Looking after brothers, sisters and/or unwell parents (if a parent is unwell and is not able to bring their child to school, the expectation is that an arrangement

should be made by the parent for another responsible adult to bring and collect their child from school);

- Appointments made for the parent/carer and not the child will not be authorised.
- Waiting in for the utilities engineer;
- Getting up late;
- Absences that have never been explained;
- Periods of absence of 5 days or more where medical evidence has not been provided.
- Forgetting/not being familiar with the start dates of term; and
- Holidays in term time that have not been authorised.
- **A minor ailment such as a slight cold or cough is not an acceptable reason for failing to attend Nursery.** Please advise a member of the Nursery team and we will ensure your child is monitored even more carefully.

### **Persistent Absenteeism**

#### **Nursery age Children**

We appreciate that young children often suffer from illnesses, especially when they first start at a new Nursery. However, their places at Nursery are funded by the Government, via the Local Authority for their 15 or 30 hours Nursery education. Where a child is deemed Persistently Absent, Nursery is required to submit details of the dates of absence(s) and the reasons given for the absence(s). It is possible that the Local Authority will NOT pay for your child's Nursery education after an absence in excess of two weeks (10 days). (See LBWF Financial Guidance s16).

With this in mind, **Chase Lane Nursery reserves the right to withdraw a child's place** in situations where a child is persistently absent (either in one period or a number of absences over a longer period).

#### **Children aged 5 to 11**

Persistent absence (PA) is the term used for any child below the 90% threshold, regardless of whether the school has authorised or unauthorised the absence. Should your child's attendance percentage fall to below 90% a letter will be sent home to advise you of this and your child will be monitored daily by the school and the Education Welfare Officer.

Any pupil who has reached the PA mark or who is at risk of doing so will be carefully monitored by both the school and the Education Welfare Officer.

A minor ailment such as a slight cold is not an acceptable reason for failing to attend school. Repeated absences will require the school to request that medical evidence is obtained from your doctor's surgery or local pharmacy as recommended by the Government. Without this medical evidence if your child's attendance falls below 90% parents/carers will become subject to a EWS action plan that will include allocation of additional attendance support, individual incentive programmes and will have a School Attendance Panel meeting about their case at regular intervals until they are no longer a PA pupil. If a Child's attendance falls below 85% **court action will be imposed.**

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Chase Lane Primary School exercises its right under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, 2003 to serve Fixed Penalty Notices in cases of 3 days or more unauthorised absence from school.

The school will make a request to the Education Welfare Service to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice to parents who take their child out of school without permission and also where a child fails to return to school by the stipulated date after an authorised absence.

As from September 2013, fixed term penalties will incur a fine of £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty by day 29 will result in court action being taken. This is in line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

### **Comings and goings during the school day**

The school expects that all appointments, other than emergency ones, are booked outside of school hours.

Children returning to school must sign in via the InVentry system in the Main Office. However, children cannot return to school during the following times:

Nursery	11.45am to 12.25pm
Reception:	11.50am to 1.00pm
Years 1 & 2:	12.00pm to 1.05pm
Years 3 - 6:	12.15pm to 1.20pm

Other than in an emergency, a letter or appointment card must be presented at the Main Office in order for the school to be able to authorise the absence. Early collections for reasons such as:

- seeing off or collecting someone from the airport;
- going on holiday early; and
- going to birthday, wedding or other celebrations early

will not be authorised.

Notice must be given in advance if a child needs to attend an appointment, interview or education activity at another venue.

Permission will not be granted for children to leave the school without a parent/carer having first signed them out at the Main Office.

If a child is returning from an appointment in time for a school meal, the office must be advised before 10.30am that day.

### **Children collected late from school at the end of the day**

The school has no facility for children who are not collected on time at the end of the school day. Such incidents can cause distress to children who are keen to see their parents and carers and should be avoided at all costs. Please inform the school immediately if you are running unavoidably late. Persistent late collection is deemed to be neglect and parents will be referred to Social Care.

### **Strategies for Promoting High standards of Attendance/Punctuality**

The school will award all individual pupils whose attendance and punctuality above 96%.

A weekly attendance trophy is awarded in Assembly for a class with 100% attendance the previous week.

Names of class winners will be published in our newsletter.

For the younger children – Reception to Year 2, 'I was at school every day' stickers are awarded at the end of each week to children who have attended school every day.

Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Letters will be sent to parents/carers of all pupils whose attendance falls below 90% in order to alert them of the downward attendance trend.

Regular, structured meetings will be held with the school's Education Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance/punctuality is a source of concern.

Termly reports are made by the Headteacher to the School's Governing Body on the issue of attendance/punctuality.

Pupils are constantly reminded of the importance and value of good attendance.

Pupils who have been absent for any extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

All issues which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties are to be promptly investigated by the Headteacher.

*This policy was reviewed by Colin Jeffery with the help of representatives from within the school community. It will be reviewed on a three-year cycle or earlier if necessary.*

*June 2022*