

Cunningham Hill Junior School Governing Body



Document:	Attendance and Punctuality
Agreed by:	Governing Body
Date agreed:	September , 2014
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Next review date:	September , 2017
Date reviewed:	October 2017
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Next review date:	October 2018

Cunningham Hill Junior School



Attendance & Punctuality Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Cunningham Hill Junior School aims to ensure that all its pupils receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her potential. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Cunningham Hill has an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

The school attendance policy will be made available and accessible to the whole school community.

Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at the school.
- To ensure that attendance and punctuality is a high priority for all staff, parents, pupils and governors.
- To provide clear ways of working and define agreed roles and responsibilities, to promote consistency and fairness.
- To make all expectations relating to attendance and punctuality clear to all parties affected by them.

Target

The overall school attendance target for Cunningham Hill Junior School is not less than 97%. Progress on target related information/statistics will be made available.

Communication

The importance of attendance and punctuality will be explained to pupils through PSHE and assemblies. Parents will be notified of attendance/punctuality issues pertaining to their child by; initial phone contact, letters, and meetings.

Methods used to inform parents & pupils of the link between Attendance and Achievement.

- Including information in the school newsletter.
- Providing an accessible copy of the school's attendance policy.
- Including pupil's attendance/punctuality information at parent's evenings.
- PSHE lessons.
- Letters
- Special attendance and punctuality assemblies
- Special end of term/year attendance and punctuality award ceremonies.
- Circle time discussions with class teacher
- Meetings with attendance leader
- Contacting parents re attendance/punctuality at an early stage.
- Reviewing and updating the school attendance policy

Registration Procedures

The school will keep:

- An admissions register, which records the personal details of every pupil at the school,
- An attendance register which records every pupil's attendance at both morning and afternoon sessions that the school is open to pupils.
- An absence book, where phone calls / messages to school are logged regarding any absences of children.
- The admissions register will include the following information for every pupil:
Full name, gender, date of birth, the date the pupil was admitted to the school, the name of the school the pupil last attended and their UPN number
- The name and address of every parent and carer of the pupil that is known to the school;
Which of these parents and carers the pupil normally lives with;
- Emergency contact details of the parents and carers.
- The school may include further parental information in order to enhance communication or conduct security checks when parents contact the school.

Class Registration

1. The school playground gates will be opened from 08:40am
2. School starts promptly at 8.55am
4. When the member of staff indicates, all pupils will line up in the designated area for their class, where the class teacher will be waiting at 8.55am.
5. On arrival at the class, the teacher will conduct registration by 9.00 am.
6. Registers close at 9.30am
7. The school administrator will analyse all registers and input the relevant data into the computer system.
8. The school administrator will compile a list of the names of absent pupils from the registers.
9. First Day Calling will commence at 9:30am.

Late System

1. Pupils arriving after 9.00am will be marked as late in the register.
2. At 9.00am all entrances to the school will be closed.
3. All pupils arriving after 9.00am must be accompanied by an adult and must sign in in the late book with a reason and a signature of parent/carer. If not accompanied by an adult, the parents/carers of the pupil will be contacted.
4. A designated member of staff will ensure that pupils entered in the late book are also marked down in the relevant class register correctly.
5. Pupils arriving at school after 9:30am will be marked in the register as authorised absence, only if an acceptable reason is given by the parent/carer.
6. First Day Calling will commence at 9:30am, and a request for a written explanation of absence will be sought from parent.

Punctuality Procedure

1. Pupils with two or more lates in a week will result in a phone call home.
2. Pupils who are late four times or more, in a two week period, will receive a phonecall from the headteacher.
3. A further four or more lates in the following two week period will result in the pupil's parent/carer being sent a letter requesting their attendance at a meeting with the Headteacher.
4. Failure for a pupil and parent/carer to achieve target will result in the parent/carer having to attend a second meeting and information passed on to the Attendance Improvement Officer.
5. Failure to adhere to agreed targets panel may result in parent penalty notices or parent prosecution proceedings being initiated.

Attendance Procedure

1. All pupils who are not in school by 9:30am will be regarded as being absent and be marked in the register as an unauthorised absence when no reason is given by parents.
2. First Day Calling will commence at 9:30am to find out why pupils are not in school, if parents have not already called in or spoken to the school.
3. If phone contact with parents/carer is not achieved then a letter will be sent out on the first day of absence.
4. If there is no contact from a parent, First Day Calling will continue everyday until contact has been achieved or until the child has returned to school.
5. If a child is absent for at least ten days without contact from parent/carer then the designated liaison officer will contact the LA's Attendance Improvement Officer and make a referral.
6. Pupils who less than 90% attendance in a rolling 6 week period will result in the pupil's parent/carer being contacted by the Headteacher by letter and may result in requesting their attendance at a meeting. Targets will be set at this meeting. (see attendance meetings).
7. Failure for a pupil and parent/carer to achieve a target within the agreed time period will result in the parent/carer having to attend a second meeting. The second meeting will be with the head teacher and the Attendance improvement Officer will have been informed.
8. Failure to meet targets and/or unauthorised absences of more than 15 sessions over a rolling termly period will result in a meeting of Headteacher and Governors to decide actions and may result in parent penalty notices or parent prosecution proceedings being initiated through the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Attendance and Punctuality Meetings

At the first late meeting the learning mentor will discuss the following:

- Enquire as to reasons for absence or persistent late attendance.
- Identify any areas of need & offer at least one measure of support.
- Implement enhanced monitoring & targeted intervention for pupil.
- Remind parent of the school's policy and expectations.
- Set achievable and reasonable targets (pupil/parent).
- Utilise incentives and rewards.

At the second meeting the learning mentor and attendance leader will discuss the following:

- Enquire as to why the previously set targets have not been met
- Pupil's statistics and attainment information.
- The link between good attendance/punctuality and achievement to be made clear.
- Identify any areas of need & offer at least one measure of support.
- The school attendance/punctuality policy will be referred to, in order to remind parents/carers of the school's and the LA's expectations.
- A home school agreement/contract made to include achievable and reasonable targets over a prescribed period of time.
- Formal notification of the next stages in the school's procedures.
- Analysis of the pupil's stats re attainment, attendance and punctuality.
- Review of case and progress/engagement so far.
- Head and Governors to meet as to the next course of action.
- A meeting arranged with the attendance improvement Officer.

Religious Observance

The school will authorise absence that is due to religious observance but the day must be:

- Exclusively set apart for religious observance.
- Set apart by the parents' religious body (not the parents).

Term Time Holiday Absence

- Holidays in term time are discouraged by the school and Hertfordshire LA.
- Holidays in term time are for exceptional circumstances only, and will not necessarily be granted.
- Leave will only be granted where proper procedures have been followed.
- Special Leave will not be granted retrospectively.
- The head teacher is the only member of staff who can authorise a special leave request.

Requesting Term Time Leave

1. A request for a pupil to have special leave during term time must be made using an Exceptional Absence Request Form, which is available from the school office, or downloadable from the school web-site.
2. Each special leave request is considered on an individual basis, using the criteria laid out below.

3. All applications for special leave in term time must be made at least 7 days in advance by the parent(s), carer(s) that the pupil normally resides with.
4. If the school does not authorise the special leave request and the child is subsequently absent from school, the absence is marked as unauthorised and this could result in a fine being imposed.
5. If a pupil is kept away for longer than the agreed period, without additional notification/contact from a parent/carer, a referral will be made to the Inclusion team.
6. The additional period of absence will be marked as unauthorised (unless there are unavoidable reasons).

Criteria Used to Authorise or Deny Special Leave

- If the leave request is exceptional and the date is not optional
- The amount of time requested
- The age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record
- The proximity of SATs and public examinations
- The length of the proposed leave
- The pupil's ability to catch up the work
- The pupil's educational needs
- The general welfare of the pupil
- The circumstances of the request
- The purpose of the leave
- The frequency of the activity
- When the request was made

The head teacher is the only member of staff who can authorise a special leave request during the school term.

Strategies

The following strategies will be used by the school to address attendance and punctuality issues:

- First Day Calling
- Breakfast club
- Afterschool clubs
- Individual attendance awards
- Whole school competitions
- Assemblies
- Attendance/punctuality award ceremonies
- Maintaining clear and effective policies and procedures
- Making the school's attendance policy available to parents, staff and pupils in accessible formats.
- Targeted interventions

Resources

In order to achieve and maintain good levels of attendance the school will utilise the following:

Registers

A register will be taken by the class teacher to ensure all pupil attendance is recorded at the beginning of the am and pm sessions.

Assemblies

Encouraging and interactive assemblies, containing information and themes based on maintaining good attendance and punctuality will be held during the year.

Computer database (software)

To ensure that all attendance and punctuality statistical information is recorded in a clear way, using SIMs software. All attendance/punctuality records will be kept for at least three years.

Late book

To keep a record of all pupils who arrive after school starts, in order to inform parents and to be used to determine pupils in need of targeted intervention.

First Day Calling System

A designated member of staff will ring the parent/carer of every pupil who is not present at school by 9:30am on the first day of absence. This will be to ascertain the reason why the pupil is not at school. All information re first day calls will be recorded and logged appropriately.

Letters

Attendance letters will be sent on behalf of the Headteacher where repeated attendance issues have arisen. Letters will also be to notify/remind parents of school procedures, or to offer support. A letter from the school will be sent out to confirm/invite parents/carers to all attendance related meetings.

Attendance Meetings

The school's procedure relating to attendance includes parent/carer meetings with the teacher and head teacher.

School Prospectus

A document publishing basic information about the school will be made available to parents/carers. This document will contain key information relating to the school's ethos and policy regarding attendance and punctuality.

Exceptional Absence Request Forms

These request forms are available from the school office or on the school Web-site.

Roles & Responsibilities

Governors

- May be requested to sit in on attendance meetings with parents.
- Will participate in reviewing the school attendance policy at least once a year.
- Attendance will be discussed at every governors' meeting.
- Will ensure that an appropriate budget will be allocated to enhancing the school's ability to address attendance and punctuality issues.

Head teacher

- Will conduct register checks on all registers at least once a term.
- Will inform governors of attendance progress.
- Will meet with individual parents at the appropriate staged meetings.

Teachers

- Responsible for taking and maintaining daily registers in line with relevant legislation "The Education (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2006".
- Obtaining written explanations for absence (medical notes etc).
- Liaising with the SLT at least once a term to discuss attendance issues.
- Use creative and innovative methods in encouraging punctuality and attendance.

Parents/carers

- To ensure their child is present and on time at school everyday.
- To ensure their child is collected from school on time everyday.
- Ensuring written explanations are given to class teacher/office staff for all periods of absence.
- Attending all meetings regarding their child's attendance.
- Notifying school of child's absence by 9:30am on the first day of absence.
- Make written requests for special leave during term time, using the correct form.
- To adhere to the school's policy's, decisions and contracts.

Pupils

- Ensuring that they attend school everyday on time.
- Must be aware of and adhere to the school's attendance procedures.
- Achieve all targets set as part of targeted interventions
- To participate in school activities to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality.

School administrator

- To input relevant data from the attendance registers into the computer systems.
- To create and maintain systems to ensure efficient communication, between; staff, school and home (parents/carers), the school and external agencies/partners.
- Sending late/attendance letters.
- Recording all contact with parents re attendance/punctuality.
- To produce half-termly print outs of the following attendance and punctuality statistical data:
 - ☒ Whole school
 - ☒ Year groups

- ☞ Individual Pupils
- ☞ Class

Caretaker

- To ensure that clocks are present and maintained in each classroom, office and key areas of the school.
- To ensure that all clocks are synchronised with the correct time (GMT/BST).
- To ensure that all school entrances (except the main entrance) are closed at 9am.

External Agencies

External agencies' involvement will be sought for the following reasons:

- To provide support for parents re attendance and/or punctuality.
- To seek advice/information regarding legislation or good practice.
- To initiate parent penalty notices/prosecution procedures.

Referrals to external agencies will be conducted by the Headteacher in the following instances:

- Parent/carer not engaging with school re attendance issues.
- When a pupil has had 10 days of unauthorised absence, without parental contact with school (to aid the school's tracing of a pupil).
- In accordance with relevant legislation and statutory provisions.
- Individual targets not met or home school agreements/contracts breached.
- No improvement in attendance performance within specified time.
- Decision by the head teacher or Governors to seek further advice
- To seek advice/information or support.
- Before taking a pupil off the school's admission's register.
- When a home school agreement/contract has been breached.
- If there are attendance patterns that may cause concerns relating to child protection issues.

Where other agencies are already involved with a family, a decision to make a referral may be made at an earlier stage in the interest of safeguarding children.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school attendance policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually. Evaluation of the school's policies and procedures will be conducted by taking into account:

- The views and feedback from; parents, pupils, partners and external agencies.
- Statistical data (spreadsheets, charts, graphs).
- The attainment levels across the school
- The school's performance in meeting the targets set across the school at the beginning of the academic year.

Justine Elbourne-Cload
Headteacher
September 2014
Reviewed Oct 2016
Reviewed Oct 2017