



Chestnut Lane School

Attendance Policy

INTRODUCTION

The school has a responsibility to promote and monitor regular attendance.

Attendance is monitored through registering children twice daily, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

AIMS

This policy will set out the procedures for monitoring absences, how parents should request absences, as well as the grounds on which an application for leave of absence will be approved or refused. It is intended that this clarification will improve pupil attendance still further.

OBJECTIVES

- to ensure that parents are clear about the law on attendance, so that all absence may be correctly classified (authorised or unauthorised).
- to reinforce the principle that schools may grant leave but that they are not required to do so.
- to indicate to parents the school's disapproval of term time holidays, except in exceptional circumstances.

THE CURRICULUM

Absence from school, whether for illness or for other reasons, hampers a child's progress. If parents are unsure as to whether or not to keep a child home or send him/her to school, we generally prefer them to come to school if they are well enough. If the child deteriorates, then we will always contact the parent. Children should not stay at home simply to finish a course of antibiotics if they are otherwise well.

Medicines can be given by the parents at home, before school, after school, lunchtimes and before bedtime.

PROCEDURES

Daily attendance

It is very important that children arrive on time. Parents and children should go to the classroom on arrival - any time between 8.40am - 8.50am. The children will be greeted by a member of staff at the classroom gate and a second member of staff will supervise the children when they are in the classroom. Registration follows and registers are sent up to the office.

The registers are closed at 9.00am, and are sent to the school office by 9.10am. Any child arriving after the register has been closed must go to the office for a late mark. If the child arrives after 9.30am, the mark in the register will be recorded as an absence for the whole morning.

Illness

If a child is ill, we expect parents to telephone or email the school office on the first day of absence, and then provide a letter (addressed to the class teacher) on their return if the child

is absent for more than three days. If we do not receive a phone call or email we will ring the parents to find out why their child is absent.

Music or dance examinations

Absence will always be authorised for music or dance examinations. The date and time of the exam should be notified in advance, and details of the proposed arrangements for collection and return of the pupil concerned.

Medical appointments

Appointments of a medical nature (particularly hospital appointments and speech and language) are sometimes unavoidable during school times, and these will generally be authorised. We urge parents to try to make appointments close to the start or end of a school day to minimise disruption to the child concerned and to the class.

Religious observance

Leave of absence for religious observance will be authorised. Please note the School may contact the religious body to check it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Compassionate grounds or educational reasons

The Head Teacher may authorise absence on compassionate grounds or for sound educational purposes.

Exceptional circumstances and holidays

The DfE statutory guidance notes states.....

Therefore in exceptional circumstances, parents may be granted leave.

A 'Leave of Absence' form (available from the school office) should be submitted to the Headteacher not less than ***one month*** before the date required.

The school decides whether an absence is "authorised" or "unauthorised".

Authorised and unauthorised absences are recorded on the end of year annual report for children.

Headteachers should only authorise leave in exceptional circumstances. If a headteacher grants a leave of absence request, it will be for the headteacher to determine the length of time that a child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as norm.

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child age 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly. If taking an unauthorised term time holiday is grounds for issuing a penalty notice according to the local authority's code, and if the leave of absence for holiday was not authorised by the school, either the school or the local authority may issue a penalty notice.

Applications for leave of absence should be made in advance to the Head Teacher using the appropriate form (available from school office) before any commitment is made.

The Head Teacher will make a decision about whether an absence is authorised or not.

Parents should never anticipate approval for leave. Work **will not** be set by teachers for pupils to complete during absence for holidays during term time.

N.B. Please refer to the government statutory guidance and departmental advice on 'School Attendance' as well as 'School behaviour and attendance parental responsibility measures'.

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