

CHARFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Working together.... Learning for life



Attendance Policy

Author		Dafydd Lawday	
Date approved by Finance / Curriculum Committee		Chair of Committee	
Date ratified by Full Governing Body		Chair of Governors	
Start Date	Sept 13	Headteacher	
Review Date	Sept 16		

RATIONALE

Charfield Primary School recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil's achievement. .

GUIDELINES

Regular Attendance

Charfield promotes good attendance and we work hard at achieving this. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Real disruption to individuals' educational progress is a result of the full attendance pattern being broken. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

School will:

- Share with parent/carers at parents evening the children's attendance rates in November and March
- Report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance with the end of year report
- Contact parents should their child's attendance drop below an acceptable percentage.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through letters home, and stickers and certificates in celebration assembly
- Attendance targets for 2013-2014 will be: Individual children - 95%, and a whole school target of 96%

Understanding types of absence

Every half day (session) absence from school has to be marked in the register and given a code by the school. The absence will either be **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If we do not receive details as to why a child is absent it will always be **unauthorised**. Examples of authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or another unavoidable cause.

Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS)

We work closely with the Family Intervention and Support Service to ensure good attendance rates. Attendance is closely monitored by the school and FISS. Parents are contacted and invited into school for attendance meetings if poor attendance and lateness persist.

These meetings are to establish the main reasons for poor attendance and offer support and guidance to improve the attendance of the child. There may be other support agencies we can ask for help such as the School Nurse, or a Parent Support Adviser. If unauthorised absences persist, the school can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Local Authority.

Absence Procedures

There are times however, when your child may not be able to attend school. If a child is ill and will not be attending school, parents are asked to telephone the school before 8:40 am on the first day of absence. In the unlikely event that absence exceeds a week an additional phone call will be required. If we do not receive a telephone call, the child is entered in the register as absent and the office will telephone or text home to establish the reason. The reason for absence will be entered onto the school register system with an appropriate code.

If no message is received by the following week, a letter is sent home with the child asking the parent for the reasons for absence, with a reply slip to be returned to the office.

It is anticipated that by making first day calls, and following up **all** absences, all parents will get into the habit of calling the school themselves to notify of absence due to illness etc.

If your child needs to leave school during the day for any reason, a note or telephone call is essential stating the reasons why and who will be collecting the child from school. You will be asked to sign the signing-out book in the main office.

Absence Concerns

All the staff at Charfield Primary School promote and celebrate regular attendance. Regular attendance ensures continuity in a child's learning, safety, welfare and happiness.

When a pupil's attendance rate is a concern we will take action. Concerns **will be raised** with parents when attendance falls below **95%**. A **School Attendance Meeting (SAM)** will be held if a pupil's attendance falls below **90%** (see appendix 3)

Truancy is a very rare occurrence. Nevertheless Charfield takes truancy seriously and action is taken straight away if truancy is suspected. Once the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher is notified they will contact the child's parents to share concerns. Parents/Carers are encouraged to locate and return their child to school ASAP. If parents are unable / unwilling to do so then the Head teacher will determine the next course of action.

On return to school the Head teacher will meet with the pupil and parents to discuss the truancy and develop a plan of action to ensure no reoccurrences.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and can be embarrassing for the child. Good time keeping is a vital life skill, which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8:45 am**, we open the school doors at **8:40 am** as we expect our children to be in class at 8:45 am.

The school bell at **8:45 am** is when the register period begins. Registers close at **9:00 am**. A child, who arrives at school after 9.00 am, will be registered as late, and entered in the 'late arrival' book in the office. If a child is late they **must** arrive at school via the main door, so that their arrival is recorded.

If your child arrives for school after **9:30 am**, in accordance with the Regulations, they will have an unauthorised absence for that morning session because they are arriving more than 30 minutes after the register has closed.

Leave of Absence (including holidays) in Term Time

Holidays in term time have had a significant part on school attendance figures. This is an issue for all schools in South Gloucestershire.

Adaptations were made in Sept 13 to the Attendance Regulations (2006). A key change was the removal of a school's option to authorise holiday. Therefore there is **no** automatic entitlement in law for leave of absence during term time. Authorisation for leave of absence can only be authorised in 'exceptional circumstances'. Please note the following points:

- All requests for 'exceptional circumstances' leave of absence must be made in advance in writing to the Head Teacher.
- Absence **will** be authorised for religious observance to a body which parents/carers and the child belong.
- Requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The nature of an exceptional circumstance will be at the Headteacher's discretion.
- South Gloucestershire council has stated that any **unauthorised** leave of more than 5 days recorded in 7 school weeks **can** result in the school requesting the Local Authority issue a penalty notice.
- The notice is a fine of £60 per parent per child if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice; but rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days.
- The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted – details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.
- If the fine remains unpaid after 42 days, the local authority will prosecute the parent for the non-attendance of the child at school.

Exceptional Leave of Absence will **not** be granted for:

- Shopping, birthdays or similar occasions.
- Any pupil who has an attendance rate of less than 95% over the last 12 months
- More than one occasion in an academic year

Leave of Absence will **not** be granted during the following weeks, **for any reason**.

Dates	Year Group(s) this affects
September – First 2 weeks of term	All Year Groups (settling in period)
Week Beginning 11 th May 2015	Year 6 (KS2 Sats)
Week Beginning 15 th June 2015	All Year Groups (Summative Assessment Week and Y1 & 2 Phonics Screening)

Request for absence from school forms (Appendix 1) are available from the school office, and must be returned directly to the school, so that it may be reviewed and registers can be maintained appropriately.

Summary

We believe that our policy on attendance will help parents support our attempts to provide the best possible education for the children. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Positive advice on attendance, term time holidays and lateness are given on the 'Attending School' leaflet produced by the school and distributed to every family.



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REQUEST TO TAKE ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Before completing this request form, parents must refer to the information on the reverse of this form.

Completed forms should be returned to the office at least two weeks in advance of the proposed absence, and before any bookings are made.

Name:	Class:	
Date From:	Date To:	Total Number of School Days

Please give FULL details of the special circumstances that require absence from school during term time (If this section is not completed, permission cannot be granted.)

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____

Date:- _____

<p><u>For completion by office</u></p> <p>Attendance Record between the dates of _____ & _____ %</p> <p>All Illness/Medical Absences _____ Sessions</p> <p>Holiday / Other Absences _____ Sessions</p>	<p>Leave of Absence will <u>not</u> be granted during the following weeks</p> <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width:30%;">Dates</th> <th style="width:70%;">Year Group(s) this affects</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>September – First 2 weeks of term</td> <td>All Year Groups (settling in period)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Week Beginning 12th May 2014</td> <td>Year 6 (KS2 Sats)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Week Beginning 16th June 2014</td> <td>All Year Groups (Summative Assessment Week and Y1 & 2 Phonics Screening)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Dates	Year Group(s) this affects	September – First 2 weeks of term	All Year Groups (settling in period)	Week Beginning 12 th May 2014	Year 6 (KS2 Sats)	Week Beginning 16 th June 2014	All Year Groups (Summative Assessment Week and Y1 & 2 Phonics Screening)
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HEADTEACHER'S DECISION:

Absence to be recorded as :	Authorised Exceptional Circumstance	Authorised Educational / Medical Reason	Unauthorised
Comments:			
Signed: _____	Date: _____		



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Leave of Absence - Holidays requested in term time.

“Every Lesson Counts”

Dear Parent/Carer,

The information within this letter stresses the importance of school attendance and to ask for your support in not taking your child out of school during term time.

Every lesson really does count for your child; children can quickly fall behind if even one day is missed. Holidays and infrequent days taken in term time (long weekends etc) can have a detrimental effect. Catching up even a little lost time in school can be difficult for children. The gap in learning makes them more likely to feel alienated from their class and struggle to ‘catch up’. There have been incidents where a break in attendance has caused children become more reluctant to attend school and academic progress affected. If poor attendance habits develop at primary school, children can struggle at secondary school or be at increased risk of harm.

Decisions to authorise leave during term time is at the discretion of the school Headteacher. If you are considering requesting leave for your child in term time, the school takes the South Gloucestershire Council guidance into consideration.

The school WILL NOT authorise absences for:

- Shopping, birthdays or similar occasions.
- Any pupil who has an attendance rate of less than 95% over the last 12 months

Leave of Absence will **not** be granted during the following weeks

Dates	Year Group(s) this affects
September – First 2 weeks of term	All Year Groups (settling in period)
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Week Beginning 15 th June 2015	All Year Groups (Summative Assessment Week and Y1 & 2 Phonics Screening)

Any unauthorised leave in term time of more than 10 sessions (5 days) in one term may result in a Penalty Notice being issued. The Notice is a fine of £60 -£120 per parent, per child. If the Notice remains unpaid after 42 days the local authority will prosecute the parent for the non-attendance of the child at school.

For further information about leave in term time please contact the school or the Family Intervention and Support Service (North) at Patchway Hub



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CONFIRMATION AND REASON FOR ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Dear Parent / Carer

Our records show that your child was absent between the dates shown below. As we have not yet received a letter from your self to confirm this we would be grateful if you could complete, sign and return this form.

If the school receives no confirmation then the Headteacher may class the absence as unauthorised. In the event of repeated unauthorised absence support from the **Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS)** will be sought. More than 10 sessions (5 days) in one term may result in a Penalty Notice being issued

Name:

Class:

Date From:

Date To:

Total Number of School Days

Please give FULL details of the circumstances that required absence from school (If this section is not completed, authorised absence cannot be granted.)

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____

Date:- _____

Attendance Procedures



