



# Copnor Primary School

## A9. Attendance and Punctuality Policy

### **Rationale**

Good attendance and punctuality are essential to high achievement.

### **Aims**

Our aim is to promote good attendance and punctuality to achieve a result better than the national figures, for both overall attendance and for persistent absentees. Our policy aims to achieve this through both proactive and reactive strategies.

The policy was written to cover the guidance in “Keeping Children Safe in Education”, Sept 2021 and in “The Prevent Strategy”, June 2015.

### **Proactive strategies**

1. The provision of a clean, comfortable learning environment with a caring ethos so that children want to attend school is provided. Prompt action when a child is unhappy in school, for whatever reason, is taken by staff in consultation with parents/carers.
2. Strong messages are sent to parents/carers that their child should attend school. This is done through initial parents’/carers’ meetings, newsletters and during staff contacts with parents/carers.
3. Clear guidance for parents/carers is provided as to how to inform the school if their child is going to be absent. This is in the school prospectus and reminders are put in the newsletters and on the school web site.
4. All children with 100% attendance- each term and each year - are awarded a certificate in an assembly.
5. Identified vulnerable groups, such as pupil premium children, have their attendance tracked each term so that proactive strategies can be put into place to encourage better attendance if needed.
6. Attendance is tracked for individuals under the categories of attendance below 95%, below 90% and below 80% each week so that proactive strategies can be put into place to encourage better attendance.
7. A leave of absence in term time can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Holidays during term time will not be authorised, unless the emotional well-being of the child is likely to be affected. If a leave of absence is rejected, the Leave of Absence Form (LOAF) is returned along with a letter warning that if the parent does decide to take the holiday then we will report this to the School Attendance Team. This may result in a fixed penalty notice.
8. We will ask for evidence to support any reason if any additional days of absence are reported for a child which fall immediately before or following a Leave of Absence period. If evidence is not made available within one week of a child’s return to school then any additional days will also be recorded as an unauthorised leave of absence and reported to the School Attendance Team. This may result in a fixed penalty notice. The school’s leave of absence rejection letters will remind parents/carers of this.

9. We register attendance at the beginning of the morning and the afternoon session in school. We use a computerised registration system to record absences. All absences are categorised as authorised or unauthorised in accordance with the LA guidance (See Appendix 1) and this information is reported to parents/carers annually and more regularly where attendance has fallen below 90%.
10. Children arriving after 9:00am will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Such absences may lead to a fixed penalty notice.
11. When a pupil leaves school during the day for an authorised reason he/she will be signed out by an adult.
12. The Attendance and Punctuality Policy is published on the school website and is provided in the induction pack.

### **Reactive Strategies**

1. Admin staff will seek the reasons for unreported absences each day. Text messages are sent as soon as possible – this is the immediate priority in the morning. If no reply is received, this is followed by a telephone call. The outcomes of the calls and texts is recorded.
2. If on-going attendance is below 95%, then the Attendance Officer will alert the class teacher and a “green letter” is sent to parents/carers informing them of their child’s level of absence and offers support. If absences still continue then an “amber letter” is sent asking parents/carers for medical evidence to support these absences and informing them that without such evidence these absences will remain unauthorised. These actions should happen at least once per fortnight. A fixed penalty warning letter can be requested after 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days). If absence doesn’t improve after 30 days, a fixed penalty fine will be sent to parents/carers.
3. If a child is reported absent from school for illness on five consecutive days or more, on the fifth day we will ask if evidence can be provided to support the absence. If evidence is not made available to school, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and we will report this to the School Attendance Team. A fixed penalty notice warning notice can be requested after 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days). If absence does not improve after 30 days, a fixed penalty fine will be sent to parents/carers.
4. The Attendance Officer meets half-termly with the Head Teacher to check absence rates. The School Attendance Team will be informed of particular problems. This can then lead to consideration of legal action.

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