

# Coulsdon Church of England Primary School



## Attendance Policy

**The ethos of this school is to enable every child to learn and develop in a Christian environment. We ask all parents of whatever faith applying for a place here to recognise and support this ethos and its importance to the school**

*Together, growing in mind, body and spirit*

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**Statement of intent**

Coulsdon Church of England Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, outstanding attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Coulsdon Church of England Primary School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

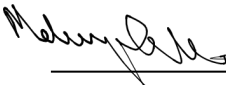
Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

- Promoting and modelling outstanding attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with parents and other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Education Act 1996
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- 1.2. This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - DfE (2022) 'School attendance'

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of Coulsdon Church of England Primary School.
- 2.2 The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.3 The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- 2.4 The Head Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Primary Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- 2.5 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Primary Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 2.6 Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling outstanding attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 2.7 Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- 2.8 Parents are expected to promote outstanding attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:
  - **"Absence"** as:
    - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
    - Not attending school for any reason.
  
  - An **"authorised absence"** as:
    - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
    - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave and has been evidenced.
    - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
    - An absence due to a family emergency.

- An **“unauthorised absence”** as:
  - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
  - Truancy before or during the school day.
  - Absences which have never been properly explained.
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed at 9:30am.
  - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
  - Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
  - Leaving school for no reason during the day.
  - Absence due to a family member being unwell
  
- **“Persistent absenteeism”** as:
  - Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year **for any reason.**

## 4. Training of staff

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils during safeguarding training.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their new starter induction.
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

## 5. Parent expectations

Parents are expected to ensure that their children attend school every day and will sign an agreement when they start at Coulsdon C of E Primary School to keep their children’s attendance at, or above, **95 percent** throughout the year.

## 6. Absence procedures

Parents are required to contact the school by 9.30am on the first day of absence, either by telephone or email.

If no phone call has been received and it is a vulnerable family, a phone call will be made by office staff.

In all other cases a text message will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

If there is no response from the text message the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

If a child is absent from school for more than 5 days due to illness, you may be required to provide medical evidence to verify the absence. This may take the form of a doctor's letter, hospital notes, prescription labels etc.

In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If a pupil's absence drops below 90 percent, the Head Teacher will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the parents.

## **7. Contact information**

Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.

Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

## **8. Educational Welfare Officer**

8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by meeting with parents and agreeing a plan.

8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Educational Welfare Officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

## **9. Lateness**

9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.

9.2. The school day starts at 8:55am. Pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

9.3. Registers are marked by 9:15am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by 9:00am

9.4. The register closes at 9:30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time. Pupils attending after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are in school, but this will count as a late mark.

9.5. After lunch, registers are marked by 1:20pm.

9.6. Pupils will be dismissed at the end of the school day at 3:20pm

## **10. Term-time leave**

At Coulsdon Church of England Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.

The Head Teacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.

The Head Teacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the Head Teacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.

The Head Teacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. This will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the Head Teacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

## 11. Missing children

11.1 The following procedures will be taken in the unlikely event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
  - All classrooms
  - All toilets
  - Any outbuildings
  - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.

If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked after child, or has any special educational needs, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.

When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and consequences will be issued if deemed necessary.

Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The Head Teacher will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.

Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

#### **11.2 Children who run away/go missing**

Children who run away or go missing from home or care are vulnerable to criminal and/or sexual exploitation. If we become aware of a child who is missing from home or care and that child has not been reported missing to the police we will report this using 101.

Running away may be an indicator of other problems and therefore referral to SPOC should be considered. Early intervention after the first episode may prevent a child being exploited.

Additional DfE guidance can be found in [Children who run away or go missing from home or care](#)

## **12. Religious observances**

The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.

Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

## **13. Appointments**



As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent or carer.

Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## 14. Young carers

The school understands the difficulties that face young carers and was working towards The Young Carers Award pre COVID. It is hoped that this work can be continued in the Summer Term 2022.

The school will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.

The school takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

## 15. Monitoring and review

The school monitors attendance and punctuality at least half-termly.

Coulsdon Church of England Primary School's attendance target is **98 percent**.

Details of our weekly attendance can be seen on our weekly newsletter which can be found on the school website.

This policy is reviewed every year by the Head Teacher and the Admissions Committee; the next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2023.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff, parents and Governors.

STRATEGIC LEAD FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: Karen Newsome (Assistant Headteacher)

ATTENDANCE ADMINISTRATOR: Louise Stevenson

## Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Coulsdon Church of England Primary School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. The senior leadership team (SLT) and Attendance Officer have regular meetings to discuss any attendance issues.
2. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance officer daily.
3. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a day are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
4. If a pupil's attendance falls below **95 percent**, a letter may be sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard if appropriate.
5. The pupil's attendance is monitored and, if attendance does not improve, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the Head Teacher to discuss how attendance may be improved. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the EWO, who will then conduct a home visit.
6. After the monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to **95 percent**.
7. If targets are not met and attendance falls below 90%, a member of the Senior Leadership Team makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents. If there is no improvement after an additional **four weeks**, a fixed penalty notice may be issued.