



Charles Dickens Primary School

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

School ethos:

Creativity and excellence are at the heart of everything we do at Charles Dickens Primary School. Children are encouraged to work to the best of their abilities. However, we also want them to have lots of fun along the way. In order to enrich our exciting and diverse curriculum, we offer a continually expanding range of first hand learning experiences and extra-curricular activities, tailored to meet the needs of children at different stages of their school career. We believe that it is important that our classrooms look and feel vibrant and alive and that the creativity exudes from our displays and the presentations and performances of our children. All our children will always make or exceed national expectations of progress and all the staff will support their determination and ambition with outstanding teaching. Through every strand of school life, we aim to promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of every child, alongside the academic, to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges that life offers.

AIMS

- We want all the children to benefit from regular and punctual attendance, so that they have full access to the curriculum we provide; problems are identified and acted upon as quickly as possible.
- We want parents and carers to have a clear understanding of their own responsibilities and those of the school community.

EXPECTATIONS

We expect that children will:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time
- feel able to tell a member of staff if there is a family problem with regular and punctual attendance

We expect that all parents and carers will:

- ensure their children attend school every day and arrive in good time for the 8:55am bell so that children are in class by 9.00 am ready to start their learning
- contact the school by 10.00am on the first day of any absence to explain the reason why
- not arrange family holidays to take place during term time
- provide the school with up-to-date contact numbers so that they can easily be reached at any time during the school day
- inform the school in confidence about any problem which might affect their child's attendance or punctuality

Parents and carers can expect that the school will:

- record their children's attendance regularly, accurately and efficiently
- make every reasonable effort to contact the child's parent or carer when their child fails to attend school without good reason
- deal discreetly and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent or carer
- make all efforts to encourage regular attendance and excellent punctuality
- instigate proper enquiries before removing the child from the school roll
- ensure that all families, children, staff and governors are familiar with our policy and procedures

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

We will encourage good attendance by :

- accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each session
- following up absence on the first day
- undertaking regular attendance checks
- informing parents and carers if the child's attendance is a cause for concern
- alerting parents and carers at the beginning of the school year of the importance of building a good record in attendance, which will feature on the child's end of year report
- year 5 parents to know that the attendance record may influence a child's selection for some secondary schools
- giving parents and carers an indication at 4 weekly intervals of the accumulating record if there is a cause for concern.
- including attendance targets at parents evenings
- teaching children to value good attendance, and praising them when there is an improvement in attendance particularly where there has been a problem in the past
- awarding termly pupil attendance and punctuality certificates

TERM TIME HOLIDAY REQUESTS

The school does not authorise term time holiday.

The Head teacher has the discretion to authorise a short period of absence which is due to exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances will be interpreted as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time. While decisions will be made on a case by case basis, requests will normally be refused.

Any long period unauthorised absence will result in the pupil being taken off roll in partnership with the school EWO.

The family will then have to reapply for a place on their return.

PENALTY NOTICES

As of the 1st June 2014, the local authority will be issuing penalty notices for unauthorised term time holiday. The penalty notices will begin at £60 and increase over time if not paid. If there should be a second unauthorised absence, this could then lead to a prosecution. This new protocol will bring all Southwark schools in line with other local authorities.

Unauthorised term time holiday is where a request for a holiday or absence is refused by the school or if holiday is taken without requesting permission from the school but it can be shown that the parent or carer understood that permission would not have been granted if requested.

The penalty notices will also be issued if families deliberately delay the return from a holiday without prior permission. Where penalty notices are not paid within a 28 day period, the local authority will prosecute under Section 444a of the Education Act 1996.

If the school feels that a family meets these criteria it will refer them to the Early Help Service who will then send the case to panel and they will decide if a fine is to be issued. Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days of receipt is £60 and payment after this time, but within 28 days of receipt, is £120. Only one Penalty Notice can be issued to a family per academic year but a second Penalty Notice may lead to prosecution by the Local Authority.

RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

The Admin Officer will print off weekly attendance reports and analyse for any 1 day patterns/persistent absences where attendance is below 90%

It is our routine procedure to:

- contact the parent by telephone on the first day of unauthorised absence
- if no explanation has been given for the unauthorised absence by the third day, make every effort to secure an explanation either by telephone or by post
- inform education welfare of any continuing unexplained absence
- categorise an absence as unauthorised until such time as an acceptable explanation is received
- follow up any pattern of non attendance detected by the school and/or by education welfare checks
- send a letter for parent to meet with Head Teacher and put a copy of this letter in the pupil's file and the absence letter file
- the school will analyse the impact of poor attendance on attainment

If a child continues to be persistently absent the parents will attend a meeting with a governor, headteacher and EWO. If there is no sustained improvement then the school will follow the proper legal channels.

ORGANISATION

In order for this policy to be successful every member of staff makes attendance a high priority and conveys this to the children.

See attached sheet for specific responsibilities.

REVIEW

This policy will be subject to evaluation and review and subject to changes in local and national policy.

Updated June 2014

CHARLES DICKENS PRIMARY SCHOOL – ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY PROCEDURES

	Teaching Staff	Admin Staff	Senior Management
Maintaining the Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The class teacher takes the register ‘electronically’ on Wauton Samuel at the start of the morning and afternoon session. This register is then sent electronically to Admin Officer. If a child arrives after the register has been called, the teacher should change the mark on the register and record the arrival time next to the child’s name. If the register has been returned, the child must be sent to book in at the office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Admin Officer records messages about absences received in person or by telephone. The Admin Officer monitors the registers each week. The Admin Officer makes amendments due to absence or lateness where necessary. The Admin Officer prints out class registers on a weekly basis for children causing concern. The Admin Officer prints out ‘hard copies’ of attendance on a 4 weekly basis and files in office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Head or Assistant Heads must authorised requests for absence from parents and these requests must be put in writing.
Absent Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child is absent, their parent or carer should provide a reason (written or verbal) to the office. If the teacher is given a reason, the type of absence should be recorded next to the child’s name electronically. Teachers should inform the office if a child’s attendance is causing particular concern. Letters explaining absences are filed in same file as 4 weekly print outs in office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Admin staff checks the registers each morning. Admin Officer will call parents by 10am if their child is not in school and they have not phoned in with an explanation. 	
Late Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The register is completed between 9.00 and 9.05am. If a child arrives after the register has been taken but before it has been sent to the office, the register is amended by marking the child present and recording time of arrival next to the name of the child. If the child arrives after the register has been returned, the teacher must send the child to the office to book in. The office will record late collections. If the parent or carer is very late then the child will be taken to the local social services office. Habitual offenders will be monitored by the Headteacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who arrive after their class has been taken from the playground report to the office and the reason for their lateness is recorded in the lateness book and then the child is issued with a late card. Children that arrive after 9.30 without good reason will be recorded as unauthorised late. The Admin officer monitors lateness weekly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Headteacher will be informed of serious offenders.

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