

Attendance Policy Statement (Key Stages 3, 4 & 5 Years 7 – 13)

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This policy is written in line with “Keeping Pupil Registers” guidance, September 2006 and “Family Holidays in Term Time” guidance, Autumn 2007.

At Cleeve School we recognise the need for pupils to attend school regularly. We will try to make sure that pupils want to come to school by:

- providing a curriculum that is relevant, stimulating and challenging;
- creating a caring and welcoming environment
and
- making sure that behaviour follows our code of conduct.

We recognise the need for good attendance rates and see this as one of our key responsibilities since good attendance enhances pupils’ opportunities for learning, prepares them to be responsible citizens and keeps them away from the dangers they may experience whilst truanting.

We will seek to ensure that our students achieve high standards of punctuality and attendance by:

- monitoring attendance at lessons and registration;
- working in partnership with their parents;
- liaising with the Educational Welfare Services;
- setting appropriate targets
- making attendance an issue during mentoring appointments where appropriate
- implementing the procedures outlined below.

Guidelines on the authorisation of absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise an absence. A parent cannot. The Headteacher delegates this responsibility to pastoral teams and to the Attendance Officer.

An absence should only be authorised when the Tutor is satisfied that:

Reason	Code
The student is educated elsewhere (Home tuition)	B
The reason for absence has been confirmed by the parent/guardian and is authorised – eg attendance at a funeral	C

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A pupil has been temporarily or permanently excluded by the Headteacher (until the Headteacher notifies the office that the pupil should be removed from roll)	E
Headteacher has given permission for the pupil to take annual family holiday in term time	H
Pupil has been unable to attend school due to ill health and this has been confirmed by parent/guardian (and a doctor where absence exceeds ten days).	I
Late before registration closes	L
Pupil is authorised to visit the doctor, dentist or hospital (as an out patient)	M
Reason not yet supplied. This is a temporary code.	N
A pupil is participating in a sporting or cultural event for, or supported by, the school or approved school activity.	P
Religious Observance	R
A Year 11 or 13 student is taking authorised study leave	S
Traveller absence	T
The pupil is on a school visit or foreign exchange	V
A pupil is on work experience (arranged by the school)	W
Enforced closure has shut the school	Y
A pupil is attending an interview	J
Extended family holiday	F
Family holiday not authorised	G

Only Heads of Year in consultation with the Senior Manager with responsibility for attendance may make an absence unauthorised. Codes U and O can be used for unauthorised absences.

The school will always use current 'National Codes' for the recording of absence.

Recording absence

Initially unknown absences will be assigned an N attribute. When explanation from the parent is received in this must be amended to one of the codes above (or clarification must be sought with Head of Year if the reason was unauthorised- eg truancy). If a parent fails to inform the school of the reason for absence a letter is sent at the end of the half term requesting detail of the absence.

Tutors will be informed if, for whatever reason, there are missing marks on their register. In these cases a note/ email should be sent to the clerical staff explaining whether or not the pupil

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was absent and where relevant the reason for the absence. **This is absolutely vital. Failure to do this will result in inaccurate recording of absence.**

Lates

Registers will remain open until 9.00am to allow for minor travel delays as recommended in the September 2006 guidance (section 94). Pupils arriving after this will need to explain their absence in the book held at pupil reception. There are sanctions for students who are systematically late. However, when a group of pupils are late as a result of the late arrival of a school bus then the marks of all of these students should be changed to present. This will be the responsibility of the attendance officer.

Official attendance documents

Computerised records of attendance are regularly backed up (more than once a month). At the end of the school year a “historical copy” is created and this is kept electronically for three years (September 2006 guidance, section 198).

Rewarding attendance

It is important that good attendance is rewarded. In Key Stage 3 pupils achieving 100% attendance will receive certificates of attendance signed by the Headteacher. In Key Stage 4 such pupils will receive a letter of commendation from the Headteacher or one of the deputies. Arrangements for rewarding pupils will be overseen by the Head of Year.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The responsibilities of the Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is key in maintaining registers, chasing and authorising absences and ensuring that there are no missing marks. The Attendance Officer shall be responsible for:

Task	Frequency
Printing paper registers in line with fire procedures	Every Morning

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Endeavouring to make contact with parents on the first day of absence if parents have not contacted school. (This may entail several telephone calls however messages are only left on parent mobile 'phones)	Every Morning
Authorising, on behalf of the Headteacher, the absence of a pupil on receipt of a parental message/ after speaking to the parent	Daily
Making sure that the paper registers are put out, and there are plentiful fresh copies	Twice daily
Recording attendance in CMIS of those who have taken the register on paper.	Daily
Checking for missing marks, chasing relevant tutors and ensuring that marks are inputted.	Daily
To meet with the EWO	Weekly
Printing fortnightly registers so that Heads of Year can monitor attendance.	Fortnightly
Chasing absences to get parental explanation when requested by tutor or Head of Year	As necessary

The responsibility of the Tutor

The Form Tutor is responsible for

- stressing the importance of both punctuality and regular attendance;
- marking their tutees attendance electronically at the start of each morning and afternoon session during the time set aside for registration in accordance with the guidelines below;



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- taking a paper register on assembly days and returning the paper register, in its folder, to the Main Reception no later than the fifteen minutes after the end of registration;
- ensuring that pupils are aware of the need to report to the Student Reception on those occasions when they fail, for whatever reason, to attend registration;
- authorising, on behalf of the Headteacher, the absence of a pupil, in consultation with the Head of Year where appropriate on receipt of a parental message; (NB Attendance Officer has the primary role in authorising absences after speaking with or receiving a message from parents.)
- the validation and retention of sickness notes (these should be forwarded to the Main Reception)
- notifying their Head of Year on the eleventh day of any absence due to illness that has not been covered by a medical certificate, or its equivalent, and recording such absence as unauthorised;
- notifying the Head of Year when it is known that a pupil is moving to another school;
- forwarding holiday request to the Headteacher for authorisation. (See below)
- Informing the Attendance Officer of any missing marks on the fortnightly herringbone attendance printouts;
- notifying the Head of Year when a child is leaving school so that records can be forwarded to the new school, allowing the office to take the child off roll.

The responsibilities of the parents

The school must seek the support of the parents in maintaining high standards of attendance and punctuality. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school regularly and on time.

Where it is not possible or practicable for a pupil to attend school his/her parent should:

- notify the school by either telephoning the absence line (662004), or sending a letter into school, on the **first day** of any absence, stating an estimated return time.
- If this has not been possible due to extraordinary circumstances then a note should be sent in with the pupil when they return to school.

At the end of a period of absence the parents will be expected to:



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- write a letter in the student's homework diary explaining their child's absence.

If a child is absent from school for more than ten consecutive school days then the parents should:

- provide medical evidence to support the absence of their child.

In the case of planned medical visits and annual family holidays the parents must seek the school's permission in advance and fill the "Leave of Absence" form.

Where possible pre-arranged appointments should be arranged out of school time.

Parental Requests for Holidays

"Time off school for family holidays is not a right. Schools have discretion to allow up to 10 days absence in a school year if they believe that the circumstances warrant it. Such special circumstances are defined as:

- Service personnel and other employees prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimum disruption to pupil's education.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other through a crisis. "

Taken from "Family Holidays in term time" guidance, produced by LEA, Autumn 2007.

The school follows the guidance issued by the DfES (Pupil Support DfES circular 10/99) that parents should not normally take children on holiday in term. The school will consider each holiday request on individual merit and will consider the age of the child, the time of year, stage in education, ability of the pupil to catch up missed work, general welfare of the pupil, parental wishes and the overall attendance pattern of the pupil. Application for a term time holiday must be made with at least 2 weeks notice, or it will not be authorised. Parents must realise that taking holidays during term time is not beneficial to their children's education and should be avoided. No parent can demand leave of absence for the holiday as a right.

School can agree not to authorise a holiday, parents should be aware that a penalty notice may be issued for periods of unauthorised holiday.

Holidays over 10 school days in length are considered unauthorised and will be recorded as such unless circumstances are *very exceptional*, in this case they would be recorded as "extended leave of absence".



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The responsibilities of the Head of Year

With the support of their year Tutors and PSWs the Head of Years have a crucial role to play in following up poor attendance and punctuality and seeking more positive responses from the families concerned. In particular the Head of Year is responsible for:

- following up with pupils any unauthorised absences (including lates) at least once a fortnight.
- ensuring that work is provided for long term absentees (including excluded pupils) to do at home.
- notifying parents that the Headteacher has granted permission for their child to go on holiday during term time.
- Monitoring the attendance of the year group and requesting the assistance of the Educational Welfare Officer where a pupil's attendance is giving cause for concern and keeping a record of such requests.

The role of the Head of Key Stage

The Heads of Key Stage 3 and 4 will assist the Year Heads by offering support in relation to individual cases and providing statistical information for discussion on a regular basis. It is the Head of Year that notifies parents that the Headteacher has granted permission for their child to go on holiday during term time.

The responsibility of a teacher arranging a school visit or trip

A teacher arranging a school visit or trip is responsible for providing the office staff with a list of pupils who will consequently miss registration. The absence of those pupils will be pre-marked and the list of names displayed on the staff notice board in accordance with school policy.

The responsibility of a Head of Department when pupils are sitting exams

When a pupil is likely to miss registration to take an examination (outside of study leave) the Head of Department must provide the office with a list of the students involved so that they can be marked present.

The role of the Education Welfare Officer



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The support of the Education Welfare Officer will be required in cases of unexplained absences and in cases of irregular attendance or lack of punctuality. In partnership with the EWO it should be possible to place non-attender's problems in the wider family context. The EWO will hold a SLA with the school.

To improve the level of attendance we would expect the EWO to follow up:

- any absences, lasting more than ten days, that have not been authorised.
- any absences that remain unauthorised after being followed up by the school.
- any pupil whose attendance falls below 80% as a result of intermittent absences.
- any other cases put forward by the Pastoral Team.
- attending a half-termly review meeting with the Senior Manager with responsibility for attendance.

The school has a responsibility to refer families to the Education Welfare Service for a penalty notice under the following circumstances:

- **Taking unauthorised term time holiday**
- **Persistent late arrival at school**
- **Overt truancy or inappropriate parentally condoned absence.**

The role of the Senior Manager with responsibility for attendance

A member of the Senior Staff Team, will be responsible to the Headteacher and Governors for the implementation of the above policy and procedures and for providing statistics on attendance.

The role of the class teacher

The class teacher will be responsible for recording attendance at each lesson. In cases of absence the teacher should first check with the students as to whether the whereabouts of the absentee are known. Where suspicion is aroused the class teacher should bring this to the attention of the form Tutor and Head of Year via email.

Data Protection Act

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Attendance data is stored on computer in compliance with current legislation. The Governing Body is registered as a data user under the 1998 Data Protection Act for the purpose of storing attendance data on computer.

This policy was last updated in June 2009