



CHESTER-LE-STREET CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

Here at Chester- le- Street CE Primary School we have a strong emphasis on attendance and punctuality. Our school target is 96%. This is monitored vigorously throughout the school as research has shown strong links between good attendance and a child reaching their full potential. Unfortunately when attendance is poor it reduces a child's chance of success, impacts on their progress and limits their development of social skills. We therefore ask for your support in achieving our target by working together to promote good attendance and punctuality. Below is a guide in how to support your child:

PUNCTUALITY:

It is the parent or carer's responsibility to ensure that their child arrives to school each day by **8.55am**. If they are late to school they will receive a late mark "L," or "U" if after the register has closed. A "U" mark is considered the same as unauthorised absence. Lateness not only impacts on your child but disturbs the learning of the other children in the classroom and prevents the teacher making a suitable start. A good morning routine is necessary and advice and support for this if needed can be sought from school.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Number of days across an academic year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

ABSENCE:

If your child is going to be absent from school it is important that you inform us **each day**, stating the reason and expected return date. This is to ensure good safeguarding of our children. The only acceptable reason for absence is illness and other select exceptional circumstances.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS should be made outside of school hours where possible and where not, your child should attend school both before and after their appointment if possible. If we do not know why your child is absent this can heighten our concern and we may need to investigate. If your child has a health condition that may impact upon their attendance please inform school as soon as possible. You may be asked to provide supporting evidence for your child's absence. This could include appointment cards, letters from your GP, Dentist or NHS provider letters or sight of the child's medication which states their name and date prescribed.

It is often difficult to decide which illness' warrant time off school as most illness is minor. I have enclosed a useful guide which I would ask that you refer to for future absences. This can also be found on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities>

INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE:

We thought it was important to help our parents and carers understand attendance as it is often included on reports sent home. Each school day consist of two sessions, morning (AM) and afternoon (PM), a child therefore receives two marks each day, equating to 10 per week. If you were notified that your child had missed 4 sessions in school, this would mean they had missed 2 days.

There are two types as absence in school:

AUTHORISED ABSENCE – where the reason given to the school for the absence has been accepted

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE - is when no reason has been provided or the reason has not been accepted by the school.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

We request that you **DO NOT** take your child on holiday during term time as this has a proven, measurable impact upon their performance. Due to new Government guidance we are unable to authorise leave of absence requests unless there are exceptional circumstances. We request that a booking is NOT made in advance of a Leave of Absence being made and approved as this can be costly to our families. Family holidays **DO NOT** meet the exceptional circumstance criteria. Please note retrospective approval is not permitted. We have a legal duty to regularly inform the Local Authority when there is unauthorised leave during term time. This may result in enforcement action from the Local Authority who may investigate the absence.

A Leave of Absence should also be submitted for consideration for weddings, funerals, religious festivals, participation in elite sporting events and any other instance you would like consideration for.

Please note regardless of a Leave of Absence being approved as authorised or not it will still impact negatively on your child's attendance percentage figure. For example Child **A** has 2 days authorised absence in their first week, would mean their attendance was 60% and be in RED ZONE.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING:

We have an Attendance Officer at school whose role is to help support the attendance of our children and they will work closely with families to aid this. In addition they regularly monitor attendance and report to parents/carers whose child falls below our school target. Your child's attendance is tracked using a "traffic light" approach. It is a parental responsibility to ensure your child attends school regularly and punctually.

- Children whose attendance is **96%** or above are in **GREEN ZONE**. These children are within our school target and are more likely to achieve.
- Children whose attendance falls between **90-95.9%** are in the **AMBER ZONE**. These children will be monitored closely and intervention will take place. This may include telephone calls, letters, meetings in school and home visits.
- Children whose attendance falls to **90%** and below is considered to be "persistently absent (PA)." These children are in our **RED ZONE**. We have a legal duty to report this to the Local Authority on a regular basis. Where necessary the Local Authority may take enforcement action.

Although 90% attendance may seem reasonable the reality is that a child at this level is missing ½ a day of school each week and will miss nearly 20 days (or 100 lessons) across the school year.

You may receive letters regarding your child's attendance. The letter will be appropriate to their attendance level. These may start as an initial concern letter, may ask that you provide supporting evidence, invite you to school or inform you of referrals made to the Local Authority. We have a legal duty to report to parents and carers when their children have fallen below our school target. We also have a duty to inform parents that if improvements are not made enforcement action may be commenced by the Local Authority. We strive to have positive relationships with all of the parents and carers at our school but we do have to follow guidance given. As a parent or carer you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure your child attends school regularly and punctually.