Cavendish Church of England Primary School



Attendance Policy

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body	
Signed: Headteacher	
Date:	Spring 2020
Date to be Reviewed:	Spring 2021

Our Vision

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do.

Challenge, Creativity, Compassion: Create a pure heart in me – Psalm 51:10

Our School Vision Statement reflects this commitment as children and staff are taught to challenge inequality, prejudice, bullying and harm; to respond with compassion and sensitivity to individual need and to respect the rights of all individuals to be safe and nurtured within God's world.

We encourage children to respond creatively to internal and external challenges in life, with compassion for others, including consideration for creation and the planet itself. Thus we show how to live justly and with a pure heart, reflecting the teachings of Jesus and God's love within our school environment.

Scope

This policy applies to all children on the school roll.

Aim

The aim of Cavendish Church of England Primary School's Attendance Policy is to provide an environment which encourages all our pupils to attend school regularly and punctually. This is vital if we are to ensure children succeed in school and in their future lives. Regular attendance and a sense of responsibility towards their learning time in school helps to develop an effective work ethos for the future, both socially and in the workplace. Attendance rates of less than 95% can impact adversely on children's learning and progress.

The whole school community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance: parents and carers, pupils and all school staff.

Contacting the School

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Section 444 of the Act says :-

> "If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence".

(N.B. Where the Education Act uses a pronoun, this refers to any child regardless of identified gender)

If a pupil is prevented from attending school because of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of the pupil's absence. This should be by telephone on the first day of absence and confirmed in writing. We require evidence of medical treatment for absence of more than 5 days, for example, an appointment card, photocopy of the prescription or medication given. We do not require a doctor's medical certification for the absence of a child. Children should not be unwell for longer than five days without seeking medical attention. Wherever possible, parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children during school hours.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Please note that the school is pro-active in guarding against FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) and against radicalisation, intolerance and extremism as covered by the Prevent Duty. We have a legal duty to pass on details if we suspect this is the reason for a child's absence. Equally, the school is pro-active in promoting child safety. If absence is suspected to be linked to child protection or safeguarding concerns, then a referral must and will be made.

At all times the school's primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of every child. Should the school not be informed of the reason for the child's absence, a telephone call will be made to the family home and then a mobile phone contact. Normally we would expect a family member to answer the phone unless involved with immediate care issues. In this instance, the family is expected to contact the school and return the call. If the call is not returned promptly, the following procedure will be implemented:

- The school will try to establish contact repeatedly throughout the day
- If contact has not been established the school will apply the following:

Child is considered vulnerable	**School is unaware of any existing concerns**
Educational Welfare Officer to be informed.	Tried to establish contact on second day, if no response, procedure for a vulnerable child will be followed.
Any external agencies working with the child to be notified as appropriate	
School staff may decide to visit the home property dependent on vulnerability and need	

Please be aware that under current County guidance, the school MUST visit the home setting if contact has been unable to be established during a period of absence.

Planned absence

Parents and Carers do not have the right to take children out of school for a holiday during term time. If, however, parents apply to the school in advance, the school may, at the Headteacher's discretion, under strict County guidelines, grant in exceptional circumstances. Parents are expected to support their child's lost learning during planned absence. The school operates fixed penalty notices and referrals to the Education Welfare Officer after six sessions of unauthorised absence. Please note that any resulting penalty notice is per child per parent and each half day counts as one school session.

Parents and Carers will wish to support their child's learning and to minimise any disruption to learning, especially during periods of Statutory Assessment. These are currently as follows:

Year 1	Phonics Screen, June 2020
Year 2	Statutory Assessment, Key Stage 1, May 2020
Year 4	Multiplication Check, June 2020
Year 6	Statutory Assessment, Key Stage 2, May 2020

Year 6 parents will also want to avoid transition arrangements and taster days at their child's secondary school, usually July.

Attendance Monitoring and Reporting

Parents and Carers should be proactive in encouraging full attendance. The school shares termly attendance patterns including percentage attendance and any notified patterns such as 'broken weeks' or whereby a child has more absence on a particular day of the week. If a Parent or Carer finds a child has difficulty or presents anxiety attending school, then they should seek support from the Class Teacher/Headteacher/School Nurse/Education Welfare Officer, as appropriate. Please contact the office to make an appointment in the first instance.

Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties, which might prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher or the Headteacher.

Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their class teacher a note from their parents to explain the absence. Pupils who arrive late must report to the school office. Late arrivals are tracked including children in Years 5 and 6 who have parental permission to walk to school unaccompanied. Please ensure that if you give your child this responsibility, they come directly to school. School staff are not responsible for children's safety whilst walking to and from school or when off site.

School's responsibilities

All the staff at Cavendish Church of England Primary School provide an ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality. School staff are responsible for ensuring that pupils have good attendance by :-

- ensuring that attendance registers are kept accurately.
- differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence. The school will follow County guidelines for authorisation of absence.
- responding to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care;
- contacting parents when they are concerned about a pupil's absences, and recording the contact;
- consulting with the Education Welfare Service if a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern;
- acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual pupils, year groups and classes
- Early Sports Club provision – the school offers an Early School Sports Club 7.45-8.45am which is paid for by the parents/carers.
- Wake and Shake – the school provides Wake and Shake exercise/dance club free of charge from 8.30-845am. This service is financed through the P.E. premium.
- Early Bird. All children are encouraged to come to Early Bird 8.45-9.00am. Children should come straight into school where they will find some independent work e.g. next steps marking at their tables.
- attendance certificates are awarded each term for children achieving 100% attendance
- a letter is sent to all parents each term informing them of their child's attendance rate
- attendance is tracked at 95%, 90% and below. Regular meetings take place with the Educational Welfare Officer and Headteacher which involve looking at absence patterns and trends over time, e.g, number of Friday/Monday absences.
- when considering patterns of absence, the school is mindful of possible safeguarding and child protection indicators.

- 90% and below is defined as persistent absenteeism by Suffolk County Council.

- fixed penalty notices and referrals to EWO will be implemented after 6 sessions of unauthorised absence.

- for scheduled absence, parents are expected to work collaboratively with the class teacher to make up lost learning.

- the school will actively promote the importance of high attendance through Newsletter articles and information from the Educational Welfare Officer.

- by signing the home-school agreement, parents are agreeing to uphold the school's policy on attendance.