



## Attendance Policy

<b>Governor Committee Responsible:</b>	Full Governing Body	<b>Governor Lead(s):</b>	Headteacher
<b>Status</b>	Non-statutory	<b>Review Cycle</b>	Annual
<b>Last Review</b>	10 July 2024	<b>Next Review Date</b>	January 2026
<b><i>Date Ratified</i></b>	<i>Ratified by FGB on 16 July 2024</i>		

### Equalities

We are committed to delivering the content of this policy to meet the needs of all staff, pupils and other stakeholders where relevant, irrespective of race, gender and disability.

### Safeguarding

Our school recognises and promotes the responsibilities of all adults in protecting pupils. Specific responsibilities involved in ensuring child protection and wider safeguarding procedures are in place and must be adhered to: please refer to Child Protection Policy and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018)

### INTRODUCTION

Attendance is a key part of raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential. Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in school (DfE May 2022).

This policy follows the most recent DfE guidance – [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (Published Feb 2024 and applies from 19 August 2024) through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance.

It also follows the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence;
- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education
- act early to address patterns of absence.

The governing board is responsible for setting high expectations of all in promoting good attendance and in ensuring the school fulfils its statutory duties in regard to attendance. They hold the Headteacher accountable for the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher is also the designated leader responsible for attendance.

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis. The school office monitors daily attendance, including checking the correct codes are used.

Parents/carers have primary responsibility and a legal duty to ensure children of school age, who are registered at school, to attend regularly.

In Education Law, (Section 576 of Education Act 1996), 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

The local authority and school will need to decide who comes within the definition of parent in respect of a particular pupil when using the legal measures, but generally parents include all those with day-to-day responsibility for a child.

Every school must make a return to the local authority of every registered pupil of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly; or has been absent from school, where the absence has not been authorised, for a continuous period of not less than 10-days (specifying the cause of absence if known).

## **VISION**

At Charlton Kings Junior School our vision is that children are exceptionally well prepared for the next steps in their lives, and is encapsulated in our school motto, '**Believe in Yourself**'.

We aim to provide them with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful, enthusiastic learners and responsible individuals.

## **The Value of Attendance**

Central to our vision is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. We consider good attendance is part of our ethos and culture. As such we expect pupils to attend every day that the school is open, unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence.

This policy details the procedures which the school follows to promote good attendance of pupils and all other matters relating to attendance/absence, registration and lateness.

## **Compulsory School Attendance**

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise (e.g. the parent can choose to educate their child at home).

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until their 18th birthday.

School will enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

### **The School Day**

CKJS opens at 8.40am until 3.10pm. There are two sessions each day. The morning session begins at 8.40am and the afternoon session begins at 1.20pm.

Attendance is required for the duration of the school day, on any day that the school is open for learning.

### **Registration**

The daily attendance register will be taken promptly between 8.40am – 8.50am or 1.20pm-1.30pm. This should give sufficient time for all pupils to enter into their classrooms. The register will remain open for 15 minutes at the start of each session. If a child is not present in the classroom while the register is being taken they will be marked as either late or absent. If a child arrives at school, after the Register is taken in class, but before it closes they will be marked as late. If they arrive after the register has closed they will be marked as absent.

Our registers are marked electronically in accordance with legal requirements at the beginning of each session (am/pm). The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent, the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

### **Authorised Absences**

The following are legitimate reasons for absence that may be authorised by the Head Teacher.

- Sickness. The Head Teacher may authorise a child's absence for illness, but may question too many absence days if your child or children are frequently absent for illness. If your child or children are absent for the reoccurrence of the same illness then school would want to work with you as a family to see if further support and advice can be offered through the School Nurse to enable the ongoing illness to be supported within school. In all cases, the reason for the absence must be reported to the school by the parent or guardian of the child before the start of the school day.
- Medical or dental appointments. **Where possible, parents should make every effort to make appointments outside of the school day.**
- Days of religious observance.
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement; family members with terminal illness. School would advise that family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interest of the child, nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendships and support from staff can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty. If you have exceptional circumstances, which have led you to request leave in term time for your child/ren, please complete the required form, which you can obtain from the school office. The Headteacher will then make a decision on whether or not the leave can be lawfully authorised and will do so only if there is a genuine, exceptional and urgent reason for a child to be absent during term time.
- Visiting other educational settings (eg to prepare for transfer to secondary school).

- Participating in performances (in line with DFE guidance - see *Child Performance and Activities Licensing Legislation* section 3.2 (February 2015) which is available via the link - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-performance-and-activities-licensing-legislation>).
- *Educated elsewhere*. On certain occasions if it is necessary for a child to be temporarily educated at another school or at a hospital school. This also applies to visits to prospective new schools.
- *Serious disruption to travel arrangements and School closure*. This has a distinct code and there are specific instances where this code will apply. The code should be used at the Headteacher's discretion and would apply to a weather-related emergency, such as snow or flooding. It would also apply to a natural disaster, such as the impact on air travel of a volcanic eruption.
- *Exclusion*. As exclusion for a fixed period results from a decision taken by the school, the absence should be treated as authorised.

**Note** : Completion of a Holiday request form or a letter from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only the Headteacher can decide whether the explanation given justifies authorising the absence.

### **Unauthorised Absences**

An absence will be deemed to be unauthorised if a child is not present and school have not been informed by the close of the register on the first day of the absence. Parents/carers can inform school by telephone (including leaving a message on the answerphone), by email, or direct contact with the school office or class teacher.

The following reasons will **not** be authorised by Charlton Kings Junior School:

- Looking after the house, or waiting for an appointment or delivery (eg a utility service).
- Looking after brothers and sisters or sick relatives.
- Shopping.
- Birthdays.
- Family Holidays or days out. (The Education Regulations 2006 amended from 1st September 2013 state 'no child may take holidays term time, unless the Headteacher deems there to be exceptional circumstances').
- Lack of transport.

Exceptional circumstances are:

- Children whose parents/carers are in the armed forces.
- Children, whose parents/carers are dictated by their employer as to when they can take holidays e.g. police, fire service or working for a company that closes between certain dates. (These requests will however need to be accompanied by a letter from the employer as to why the family can only take a holiday during the school's term time).
- A child with a parent/carer or sibling who has a life-threatening illness. (This request will need to be accompanied by a letter from a medical professional working with the family, or the request will not be seen as exceptional. The request will not be deemed as exceptional if it is the illness of other extended family members).

Any parent taking a child on holiday that has not been deemed an exceptional circumstance may be referred to the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team, who may issue a penalty notice. If unpaid, the Local Authority may take a parent to court for not fulfilling their duty under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The table below identifies the unauthorised codes used in the attendance register.

Code	Explanation	Additional notes
G	Family holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period	If the pupil is kept off school longer than agreed. Regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for the leave of absence in advance the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
N	<b>Reason for absence not yet provided</b>	All unexplained absences should be followed up. Once reason is established the register should be amended.
O	Absent from school without authorisation	
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	After 8:50am or 1.35pm

### School Responsibilities

- Ensuring that registers are marked accurately and promptly every day following the latest DFE guidance.
- Accurately differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence
- Contact parents on the first day of absence, if, school has not been notified as to why a child is absent. This means school will contact you regarding all your children if they are absent at the same time so you may receive multiple texts if you have more than one child absent.
- Follow-up unexplained absences for a maximum of two days. If no valid reason is given, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- Contacting parents when the school is concerned about a pupil's absences and making a record of this.
- Follow up any unexplained absences.
- Ensure all staff are consistent in applying this policy.
- Advise parents about the adverse affects of absence and seek regular opportunities to promote good punctuality and attendance, for example through – Induction meetings, Parents evenings, Newsletters, Assemblies, on Notice boards etc.
- Celebrate high and improved attendance.
- Set attendance targets for the School and groups within the School.
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance.
- Produce and analyse attendance reports with the aim of improving attendance (for either individuals or groups).
- Attendance targets and attendance report cards may also be used for individual pupils who struggle with daily attendance.

- Work within a multi-agency approach in order to improve attendance and support pupils and families.
- Parents whose children's absence falls below 90% are monitored weekly and sent a warning letter with a date to improve their child's attendance. See Appendix 5. If there is no improvement then an AIM (Attendance Improvement Meeting) is held followed by legal proceedings if necessary.

### **Parents'/Carers' Responsibilities**

- It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to make sure their child gets enough sleep, gets up in plenty of time to get ready and eats a good breakfast.
- Children should arrive in the school classroom between 8.40am and 8.50am (the classrooms are open from 8:25am). Any child arriving after this time should enter the building via Reception and report to the school office as a late arrival.
- The child's name, class, arrival time and any reasons given will be recorded.
- It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to contact the school as soon as possible in the morning if their child will not be attending school.
- Parents/Carers should ensure that their child attends school wearing the correct uniform and brings appropriate equipment or kit and provision for lunch.
- Charlton Kings Junior School encourages parents to help their children by showing an interest in school life. Parents are invited to attend all parents'/carers' evenings, parent/carer information evenings, to listen to reading and to supervise homework.
- If a child appears reluctant to attend school, parents/carers are encouraged to contact the child's class teacher immediately to discuss any concerns. There could be a number of reasons for this reluctance such as difficulties with school work, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important to identify any reasons for a reluctance to attend school quickly and before it becomes a more serious issue.

### **School Procedures to Encourage and Monitor Good Attendance**

The important need for good attendance and punctuality will be regularly mentioned in newsletters and in discussions with parents and children.

### **Monitoring**

School will regularly (typically 5 times a year towards the end of each half-term after October) monitor attendance of individual classes and vulnerable groups (e.g. SEN or Disadvantaged children). Where attendance falls below 95% the class teacher will notify the Headteacher. Parents receive current information about their child's attendance through the Arbor app.

The class teacher will raise the issue with the parents to establish a partnership to improve the attendance. If the attendance continues to fall, and there is no mitigating reason, the Headteacher will write to the parents to notify the concerns and to a meeting/telephone call to discuss how school can support improved attendance.

Through this monitoring, where school becomes aware of a more concerning pattern, will also monitor more closely persistent lateness and absence.

### **Persistent Absence**

Pupils who are Persistently Absent from School for whatever reason will be monitored on a week by week basis. This is a child who has an 85% attendance or lower at any given time during the academic year. Parents/Carers of a child identified as a persistent absentee will be invited to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) and/or home visit where targets will be set to be achieved by an agreed date (usually 3-4 weeks). If the attendance does not improve by the agreed date other agencies will be involved and possibly the serving of a penalty notice considered.

### **Persistent Lateness**

If a pupil is frequently late before registration closes, the matter will be discussed with the parent. The class or Headteacher will raise the issue with the parents to establish a partnership to improve punctuality. If the lateness continues, the Head Teacher will write to invite the parents/carers to a meeting to discuss how school can support improved punctuality.

## Flow Chart of Procedures

### Daily

- Enter marks for attendance in register
- Follow up absences with text/phone call



### Weekly

- Follow up unexplained absences
- Carry out any monitoring (see below)



### Termly

- Print attendance reports for classes and groups (SEN, Disadvantaged, EAL)
- Inform parents of their child's attendance if it is below 95%
- Where analysis of termly reports identify:
  - Persistent lates – monitor daily and inform parents
  - Absence falls below 95% - monitor for 2 weeks and speak to parents to share concerns
  - Concerning Absence (ie <93%) – parents/carers contacted and concerns shared
  - Persistent Absence (ie <90%) – letter sent home inviting to an attendance improvement meeting (AIM) with Headteacher unless absence strongly justifiable and agreed by Headteacher.



### Yearly

- Report attendance in Annual End of Year reports