



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL



Our School Christian Vision

With thankfulness, courage, and love, we strive to improve heart and mind.

At Chilton Foliat Primary School we honour our educational heritage, supported by a strong Christian ethos. We strive to provide a diverse education that inspires children to develop a **thirst for knowledge**. This is delivered in a safe, thoughtful and nurturing environment promoting self-discipline, motivation and excellence in all that we do.

We encourage strong partnerships and inclusive relationships amongst pupils, parents, carers, staff and the wider community.

Attendance Policy

Date Reviewed	January 2024
Review Period	Annually/ 2 Yearly /Readopted/Other
Review Body	Standards Committee

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind
Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

This document sets out the Policy of Chilton Foliat Church of England VA Primary School with respect to pupil attendance. The policy is written with reference to the Wiltshire Council Local Authority Attendance Policy – Recommendations for developing a school attendance framework and policy. August 2022. It is also written with reference to the DfE guidance: School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities May 2022 and the most recent Government information concerning a national drive to improve attendance (January 2024).

Objectives

Chilton Foliat Primary School strives to provide a welcoming and caring environment, where each member of the school community feels valued and secure. We are proud of our attendance record, which is good, and are grateful to our supportive parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children. School staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each child attends school regularly and punctually. Good attendance at school is important for a child's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is our aim but we realise that this is not always possible due to illness or other circumstances.

To meet these objectives Chilton Foliat Primary School has an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support with regard to the attendance of pupils.

Aims of the policy

- To improve the overall attendance percentage of pupils at our school
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils
- To continue to develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- To maintain a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data.
- To maintain an effective partnership with the Education Welfare Officer and other agencies
- To recognise the individual needs of each pupil and family with regard to attendance
- To ensure that our children make the best use of their educational opportunities by attending regularly, punctually and in a state of readiness for learning
- To encourage, recognise and reward good attendance.

All children must attend school regularly and punctually to achieve the best possible education through an optimum use of their time with us. We have a legal obligation to keep attendance records and the parents and carers have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend regularly and inform us of any reasons for absence or lateness.

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The headteacher is the designated attendance leader and the administration staff, are responsible for checking registers and following up concerns.

Legal Framework

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure their children are educated. For most parents/carers this means registering their child at a school and ensuring their regular attendance. Failure to do so can result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted.

By law schools must:

- Take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon. The attendance register must show for every session, whether a pupil is present, absent, attending approved educational activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- Report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for ten consecutive school days or more without a known reason.

Absences are categorised as either "authorised" or "unauthorised." Authorised absences are those that have been agreed by the headteacher. Unauthorised absences are those where no valid reason has been provided for absence or those absences which the headteacher has not agreed.

Partnership Working

School attendance is the business of everyone in our school community. The governors and all staff are committed to supporting all pupils to achieve excellent attendance and regularly review school procedures and strategies to support this.

We expect that parents and carers will collaborate with us if school absence becomes a concern. Parents and carers can help to promote positive attendance by:

- Ensuring children arrive at school on time, before registers close, appropriately dressed and in a 'condition to learn' (i.e., not too tired or too hungry) and with the right equipment for the day
- Working in partnership with us to take an active interest in their child's education
- Working in partnership with us and other agencies (as appropriate) to resolve problems relating to non-attendance or which may have a negative impact on their child's attendance.

Safeguarding

The school takes the safety of all children very seriously and if a child does not come in to school we must have a valid reason for their absence. We need to be sure that a child has not left home in the morning and failed to arrive at school. We will contact parents if we have not been informed of a reason for a child's absence.

Procedures

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Non-attendance

When their child is unable to attend, parents are asked to notify the school, with an acceptable reason, on the first and every subsequent day of absence. Contact should be made before the start of the school day, either by telephone (Tel: 01488 682630) or the school email (admin@chiltonfoliat.wilts.sch.uk) The absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

- When prevented from attending by sickness or unavoidable cause
- Exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong
- For authorised holidays. Please note this can only be agreed in exceptional circumstances (please refer to Wiltshire Council's "Penalty Notices -information for parents" leaflet – copy available from school or on the website)
- When the school is closed to the child's class in exceptional circumstances (Attendance Register Code Y)
- To attend hospital appointments and emergency medical appointments. Routine medical appointments and dental check-ups should be made outside of school hours where possible.

If no reason is received, the absence remains unauthorised. Similarly, if we have reason to doubt consistently reasons for absence, then the Education Welfare Officer should be informed.

2. Lateness

Children arriving late at Chilton Foliat Primary School (after 8.50 am in the morning and 1pm in the afternoon) will be marked with an "L" if they arrive after the start of school but before the registers have closed, and with a "U" if they arrive after registers have closed. A "U" absence will be classed as unauthorised unless approved reasons are given by parents for the absence.

3. Marking Registers

Registers are marked twice daily. Once in the morning and once directly after the lunchtime break. If the school has received a valid explanation from the parent/guardian, the appropriate absence mark should be entered on the register. Registers close formally at 9.00am in the morning and 1.15pm in the afternoon.

4. Unexplained absence

If a child has not arrived in school by close of registers, and no notification has been received, the school will take action to ensure the safeguarding of its pupils. We will contact the parent/carer if a child is absent and the parent/carer has not advised that the child will not be in school. Parents/carers can expect contact on every occasion of an un-notified absence. If we cannot speak directly with the parents/carers, then we will contact nominated emergency contacts to establish the reason for absence.

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

If after three days of absence, your child has not been seen and no contact has been made with a school, a home visit will be made by school staff to ascertain the safety and well-being of your child and establish the reason for absence from school.

If after 10 days of unexplained absence and no contact with the school, we are obliged to notify the Local Authority. The Local Authority will follow their procedures for Children Missing from Education (CME) and parents may expect contact and visits from an Education Welfare Officer to ascertain the well-being and safety of your child.

5. Requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances

In accordance with Department for Education guidance, leave of absence from school including for holidays in term-time, may only be authorised in **exceptional circumstances**.

Parents are required to complete a leave of absence request form which must outline the exceptional circumstances for which the leave has been requested.

Leave of absence request forms must be completed in advance of the dates requested. We require two weeks' notice unless the absence is related to an emergency.

We do not give retrospective agreement for leave of absence so any absence not advised to the school in advance will be unauthorised.

Requests will be considered by the headteacher and parents and carers will be advised if their request is agreed.

Any pupil who has taken a term time holiday will be required to provide medical evidence if they are ill in the period directly before or after the dates advised to school.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide evidence if a pupil does not return to school on the agreed date following a holiday because of delayed or cancelled flights or other travel arrangements.

Where an unauthorised leave of absence is taken, parents may be issued with a penalty notice.

6) Consequences of persistent absence

At Chilton Foliat Primary School we will always work with you to address any attendance concerns. If we have been unable to resolve the issue, despite a number of interventions, then we may have to refer you to the Local Authority.

The Education Welfare Service has a range of actions available which include:

- a) The parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice, which carries a fine of £120, per parent, per child. This is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days of issue. If not paid at all, court action will be initiated.

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

- b) The Local Authority may initiate court action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, imposition of orders such as Parenting Orders or even imprisonment.
- c) In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of the child.

Parents should refer to the guidelines issued and published on the school website (please see www.chiltonfoliatprimaryschool.org.uk (School Documents) or ask at the School Office for a copy.

Monitoring Attendance

We are a caring school community where the needs of all pupils are carefully considered. Here at Chilton Foliat Primary School, we provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that pupils feel safe, and know that their presence is valued.

If there are specific issues which might impact on your child's attendance it is important that you talk to us so that we can support you and your child.

There may be times when we ask other agencies to become involved to help us understand and work with you to encourage regular school attendance. (e.g., Wiltshire Council, school health, Ethnic Minority and Traveller Advisory Service, Medical Needs Reintegration Service) If we feel that this would be helpful, we will discuss with you first.

We are very keen to listen to the views of children and parents about attendance matters and we welcome any feedback which helps us to shape how we work with families to address attendance issues and reward excellent attendance.

Regular monitoring of the registers will be made by the Headteacher and Admin Officer, to analyse overall absence for each pupil and identify pupils with irregular attendance or a pattern of absences that may lead to Persistent Absence (PA). An attendance summary is printed for all children with persistent absence (i.e., whose attendance falls below 90%). The Headteacher discusses this with parents if appropriate (i.e., if persistent absence has not been caused by long-term illness) to improve the child's attendance, followed by a formal letter. The attendance is monitored over a further term, when, if applicable, further letters are sent to the parent to improve attendance. If, after this period, attendance has not improved, the Headteacher will discuss this with individual parents. The Education Welfare Officer will be informed in cases of continuing low attendance.

Attendance is also monitored termly for vulnerable groups of students (EAL, FSM, Pupil Premium, SEN, Disabilities).

A record of each child's attendance percentage for the year is reported to parents annually. To support our attendance monitoring, the school keeps a record of all verbal reasons for absence on SIMS and keeps letters received by parents.

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind

Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13



CHILTON FOLIAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the governors and staff to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the school community. We will ensure that the policy reflects current DfE and Local Authority guidance.

Date: January 2024 Next Review Date: January 2026

With thankfulness, courage and love, we strive to improve heart and mind
Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst". John 4:13