

# **Chilham St Mary's CE Primary School**

## **Attendance Policy**

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### **Introduction**

We believe that every child at Chilham St Mary's CE Primary School has a fundamental right to be educated with good attendance being the key to personal development, learning and achievement in all areas. Parents, carers and teachers have a duty to encourage maximum attendance at school.

### **The Law on Attendance**

You must make sure your child gets a full-time education that meets their needs (for example if they have special educational needs). You can send your child to school or educate them yourself.

Children must get an education between the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their children are 'properly

educated, either at school or otherwise'. Children must remain in full-time education for as long as they are of compulsory school age. There is no entitlement for pupils to be granted leave of absence for holidays during term time. Under the Education Regulations (1995), the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. The register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## **Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Working together to improve school attendance August 2024
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.
- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- DfE (2013) 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs'
- DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

## **Rationale**

At our school we are committed to:

- supporting parents / carers to perform their legal duty;
- encouraging children to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly and in taking pride in their attendance and punctuality;
- working in partnership with parents, carers, our Headteacher (Miss Rebecca Dolan), Attendance Officer (Miss Chloe Arnold) and our SENDCO (Vanessa Robinson) to address difficulties and recognise external factors which influence pupil attendance;
- identifying patterns of non-attendance at an early stage and working to resolve personal/social difficulties;
- following efficiently, the school systems for accurate recording and monitoring of attendance and punctuality.

## **Definitions**

### **Authorised Absence**

'Authorised Absence' means that the school has given approval for the pupil to be away from school. Where possible, the school must be notified in advance of this. We appreciate though, that sometimes this is not possible, for instance, when a child is poorly. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents/carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents/carers will be authorised.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

An 'Unauthorised Absence' is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the combined permission of both the school and a parent/carer. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school and the school is not satisfied that the reason given for the absence is justified, even with the support of a parent. Should one sibling be poorly and not in school, we would expect to see the other sibling(s) in school if they are well enough.

### **Procedures**

The following procedures are in place and must be adhered to, to ensure that we are able to monitor attendance and punctuality effectively.

#### **Registration**

Children must attend school punctually and regularly:

- KS1 (Reception classes and Years 1 and 2) and KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) start at 8.55am

The school gates open at 8.35am each day and children are expected to be in class by 8.55am when the register will be taken. Registers will close at 9am. Any child arriving after 8.55am must be signed in by their parent/carer at the school office and will be marked as late in the register with an 'L' code.

Any arrival after 9.30am will be marked as 'unauthorised absence' with a 'U' code (unless the child is late because of a valid, agreed prior appointment).

#### **Reporting an Absence**

If a child is absent, there are only two methods for reporting this:

- A Voicemail message via the school Tel: 01227 730442
- A phone call to the school office [Tel:01227 730442](tel:01227730442)

Messages must state the child's full name, class and exact details of all symptoms - 'not feeling well' or 'feeling tired' are not symptoms.

If your child has minor symptoms for example, sniffles, feeling fatigued, they are expected to attend school.

We will of course monitor them, and contact parents/carers should we feel the need to. Alternatively, should your child wake up poorly and their symptoms improve, they should then be brought to school even though they may have missed morning registration as they will receive their afternoon session mark.

Parents are required to notify the school of their child's absence using either of the above two reporting methods by 8.30am on each day of absence.

Should we not receive communication by 9.30am, then a telephone call will be made by the School Office to find out the reasons for absence.

### **Late Attendance**

Parents must make every effort to have their children in school at the correct time to ensure they do not miss key learning. If your child is noted as being late to school frequently, an email will be sent to parents/carers to bring the lateness to their attention as a first stage. If the lateness persists, a formal letter will be sent by the Attendance Officer reminding parents/carers of their responsibility to ensure children arrive at school on time each day. Should there be no improvement, the Headteacher will write personally to the parents/carers. See Appendixes 1 and 2 for examples of these letters.

### **Concerns around Attendance and Punctuality**

If we do not receive a telephone voice message or a message on the first day of absence by 9.30am, we will ring the parents to find out the child's whereabouts. If no response is forthcoming within 30 mins, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised ('O' code).

If we have previous concerns about a child's welfare (for example, the child is on the child protection register or we believe could be in danger), we may complete an unscheduled home visit. If we continue to have concerns, then we would seek support from other agencies to safeguard the child, including the Police and Children's Services.

Where attendance is a concern, parents/carers may be required to provide medical evidence when the child returns so that the absence is not recorded as unauthorised. Parents/carers will be notified of this arrangement by letter. See Appendixes 3 and 4 for examples of these. In cases of significant concern the school, make take further steps such as the issuing of fixed penalty notices or seeking the issue of an attendance order.

Possible triggers for attendance letters could be as follows, please note this is not an exhaustive list of triggers and each case is considered on its own merit:

- Attendance is below 95%
- Frequent 'Lates' after the register has closed
- Unexplained or unauthorised absences
- Patterns forming regarding absences, for example regular Fridays and Monday absence from school.

### **Collecting Your Child Before the End of the School Day**

We expect your child to attend school for the whole day (i.e. both morning and afternoon sessions). It is recognised however, that there may be some occasions/circumstances whereby it might be necessary to collect your child earlier than 3.15pm. Early collection will only be permitted by prior request/agreement in writing (email) from the parent/carer, confirming the reason for the early collection, who will be collecting and the time. In the event one child needs to be collected early, we

would not normally expect siblings to be collected at the same time. After School Club should be considered by parents as an alternative to collecting siblings or collecting children for a reason not directly relevant, for example a parent's medical appointment.

### **Absence from Learning**

Children should attend school for the maximum number of days possible (190), since absences can have a detrimental effect on their learning.

Parents receive a list of holiday dates at the beginning of each academic year; these can be found on the school's webpage: [www.chilham.kent.sch.uk](http://www.chilham.kent.sch.uk)

Families are expected to take their holidays outside term time. Any request to remove a child from learning during term time for holiday will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. If it is necessary to make a request for Absence from Learning (see Appendix 5 and the school website: [www.chilham.kent.sch.uk](http://www.chilham.kent.sch.uk) such requests should be kept to a minimum and should not, in any case, exceed two weeks (10 days) during a school year. Your 'Absence from Learning Request' will either be approved or not; in either case, you will receive an email/letter confirming the outcome (see Appendix 6 and 7 for examples of these letters).

Any absence the day before or the day after a school holiday will be unauthorised ('O' code) unless evidence is provided.

Exceptional leave of absence (see Appendix 8) will only be authorised if attendance at the time of request is above 95% and is unlikely to fall below 95% as a result of the requested leave. Any Absence from Learning longer than two weeks (10 days) in any academic year is treated as unauthorised, and may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice.

### **Attendance at Funerals**

Requests for attendance at funeral for family members should be submitted as an 'Absence from Learning Request'. To ensure equal treatment throughout the school, only one day's absence will be authorised to attend the funeral service itself, travelling time will not be authorised unless included as part of the day's absence.

### **Attendance at School Open Mornings / Entrance Exams (applicable for Year 6 only during the months of September/October)**

Time off to attend Secondary School Open Mornings or Entrance Exams will be authorised, however, your child is expected to be in school for the other part of the day. Days off for revision prior to the Entrance Exam will not be authorised. Parents should report their child's absence for the morning or afternoon session using the normal Daily Absence Reporting Notification procedure, confirming for which session their child will be absent and which school they will be attending.

### **Strategies for Improving Punctuality and Attendance**

All staff at our school are committed to doing all they can to ensure children attend punctually and regularly. In an attempt to improve rates of punctuality and attendance we:

- refer children who are causing concern to our Attendance Officer
- Share and discuss individual attendance Registration Certificates during Parents' Evenings. In addition, the child's annual Registration Certificate is sent at the end of the academic year with the child's school report to give a view of the 'whole child' at school;
- keep a record of those who arrive late each day;
- keep a record of parents and carers who have telephoned to explain their child's absence;
- keep a record of parents and carers whom we have telephoned or left a message on the answering service;
- ensure our registers are completed accurately;
- talk with parents and carers to identify whether support is needed to get children into school and on time. We signpost to parents the support network of parents local to their home who they may wish to liaise with and we may also use pupil premium allocated money to pay for children to attend Morning club in order to improve their attendance and punctuality;
- involve governors in our monitoring procedures.

### **Celebrating attendance**

We do not celebrate individual attendance with our school as in the majority of cases, we recognise that children getting to school on time and / or attending regularly, is solely down to the responsibility of the parent /carer. We do celebrate whole class attendance and record individual classes on our attendance displays to show which classes are leading in attendance this term.

### **Long Term Absence**

When children have an illness, which means that they will be away from school for over five days, the school may signpost and encourage children to access SeeSaw where the class teacher will upload work for the child to complete at home.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the appropriate support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

### **Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Procedures**

Emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA) is a term referring to reduced or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. Rather than the term 'school refusal', the term EBSA recognises that this avoidance has its root in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. EBSA should not be thought of as a deliberate act of defiance, but instead as a complex issue inextricably linked with mental health and wellbeing.

EBSA also doesn't just mean not attending school entirely. Staff may also observe pupils:

- Not going to their classroom
- Not attending some lessons
- Avoiding some physical spaces or people

### **Why does EBSA happen?**

There is no one reason why children and young people avoid school. It varies by individual, and is

usually caused by a combination of various factors and their interaction, rather than a single cause. Potential risk factors for EBSA can be split into three main categories; the child or young person, the family and home, and the school.

**Some examples of EBSA risk factors could include:**

<b>Child/young person</b>	<b>Family/ Home</b>	<b>School</b>
Anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns	High levels of family stress (including financial stress, conflict and domestic violence)	Bullying
Difficulties with managing and regulating emotions	Being a young carer	Difficult relationships with staff members
Trauma and adverse childhood experiences	Loss and bereavement	Difficulties in particular subjects
Low levels of self-confidence and self esteem	Family history of EBSA	Demanding pressurised academic environment
Separation anxiety or attachment issues with a parent/carers	Poor parental mental health	Difficult in making and maintain friendships
Having a special need or a disability	Changes to the home environment	Transition from primary to secondary school through key stages

#### **What we do to support pupil and families with EBSA:**

Although EBSA is a complex issue, positive outcomes are very achievable. There are some strategies outlined here, split into universal approaches and more targeted strategies.

#### **Universal**

Chilham St Mary's CE Primary School takes a whole-school approach to mental health has benefits for pupils, staff and families. We involve all aspects of the school community in promoting and supporting wellbeing. By developing a culture which prioritises wellbeing and is supportive and safe, we can reduce the impact of EBSA risk factors. We have a mental health and well-being ambassador who implements wellbeing strategies, assemblies, lessons and activities throughout the school. We follow the Heart Smart PSHE scheme which has well-being focused topics throughout the year.

#### **What our staff can do**

Keep an eye out for early indicators and start conversations with parents and children.

As part of regular reviews of attendance data, school staff should try to spot early patterns of absence arising, keeping an eye out for sporadic attendance and lateness.

If staff notice these patterns emerging, beginning a dialogue with the child or young person about how they are feeling can help them open up and ask for help.

These conversations can feel difficult or uncomfortable, but will also let a pupil know that they are being listened to and supported.

**Other early indicators can include:**

- A parent or carer reporting that the child or young person does not want to come to school
- Physical signs believed to be linked to stress (e.g. stomach ache, sickness, headache)
- The child or young person often complaining of feeling ill
- Behavioural changes or fluctuations e.g. interactions with others, reduced motivation and engagement in learning tasks

**Protective Factors**

A protective factor is an attribute or condition that can help protect a child or young person against some of the risk factors outlined above, thereby preventing EBSA or reducing its impact.

Developing protective factors isn't something a child or young person can be expected to do alone. Schools play a very important role in developing protective factors in their pupils.

**At Chilham St Mary's CE Primary School...**

- We build a school culture that recognises all emotional reactions as normal and helps pupils feel safe to express their emotions.
- We have nurturing staff and a SENDCO who can initiate conversations around EBSA and offer support.
- We support children in developing effective emotional regulation strategies.
- We provide quiet or safe spaces for pupils to access if they are experiencing intense emotions.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to decision-making in the school, helping them feel that their voices are valued and heard.
- We work together to reduce everyday stressors in the classroom for pupils who easily become overwhelmed.
- We check in regularly with pupils to see whether any agreed adaptations or strategies are working and useful, and adjusting if not.

**Positive and supportive communication with families**

Chilham St Mary's CE Primary School staff ensure that parents and carers feel connected and involved with the school. This is key to support children and young people's mental health. We understand that due to the coronavirus pandemic, parents and carers may have disengaged from the school community. Some parents and carers may also have had difficult times at school themselves when they were younger, and their confidence in the ability of the school to support their child may be low.

By finding ways to involve them in school life and communicating with them regularly, we build parents' and carers' trust in the school.

We recognise that if the family of the child or young person trusts that the school will be able to support their child, they will be more likely to encourage the child to attend school, as they know that they will be cared for and supported.

**Targeted Support**

### **Assess**

We keep an eye out for early indicators of EBSA in pupils and act quickly. Work with pupils to identify the risk factors they are experiencing which may be causing EBSA.

### **Plan**

Co-produce a return to school action plan with the pupil, family and school all involved in the process. Agree a date of review, and share the plan with all parties involved. If the student is finding the idea of returning to school particularly difficult, the plan could focus on smaller steps – like meeting a friend from school or completing a piece of work – to begin the process of returning to school. Work with the child or young person on a return to school pupil support plan, detailing the support they can expect when they come back to school. Again, share this with all parties.

### **Do**

Maintain good communication with the family and pupil during the return to school – for example, supporting the completion of school work at home and sharing feedback on the work.

### **Monitor**

Monitor the progress made and adjust the plan for the next steps. Further consultation with other agencies may be needed

## **Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance**

Due to the nature of their health needs, some children may be admitted to hospital or placed in alternative forms of education provision. We recognise that, whenever possible, pupils should receive their education within their school and the aim of the provision will be to reintegrate pupils back into school as soon as they are well enough.

We understand that we have a continuing role in a pupil's education whilst they are not attending the school and will work with the child's LA, healthcare partners and families to ensure that all children with medical needs receive the right level of support to enable them to maintain links with their education.

### **Definitions**

Children who are unable to attend school as a result of their medical needs may include those with:

- Physical health issues.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental health problems, including anxiety issues.
- Emotional difficulties or school refusal.
- Progressive conditions.
- Terminal illnesses.
- Chronic illnesses.

Children who are unable to attend mainstream education for health reasons may attend any of the following:

- **Hospital school:** a special school within a hospital setting where education is provided to give continuity whilst the child is receiving treatment.
- **Home tuition:** many LAs have home tuition services that act as a communication channel between schools and pupils on occasions where pupils are too ill to attend school and are receiving specialist medical treatment.
- **Medical PRUs:** these are LA establishments that provide education for children unable to attend their registered school due to their medical needs.

### **Local Authority duties**

The LA must arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision. The school has a duty to support the LA in doing so.

The LA should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with the appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the pupil.
- Ensure the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from falling behind their peers in school, and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.

The LA should not:

- Have processes or policies in place which prevent a child from getting the right type of provision and a good education.
- Withhold or reduce the provision, or type of provision, for a child because of how much it will cost.
- Have policies based upon the percentage of time a child is able to attend school rather than whether the child is receiving a suitable education during that attendance.
- Have lists of health conditions which dictate whether or not they will arrange education for children or inflexible policies which result in children going without suitable full-time education (or as much education as their health condition allows them to participate in).

### **The Governing Body is responsible for:**

- Ensuring arrangements for pupils who cannot attend school as a result of their medical needs are in place and are effectively implemented.
- Ensuring the **termly** review of the arrangements made for pupils who cannot attend school due to their medical needs.
- Ensuring the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the arrangements to support the needs of pupils are clear and understood by all.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for dealing with health emergencies and critical incidents, for both on and off-site activities.
- Ensuring staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs are appropriately trained.
- Approving and reviewing this policy

**The Head Teacher is responsible for:**

- Working with the School Board to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory duties when supporting pupils with health needs.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other professionals to develop arrangements to meet the best interests of children.
- Ensuring the arrangements put in place to meet pupils' health needs are fully understood by all those involved and acted upon.
- Appointing a named member of staff who is responsible for pupils with healthcare needs and liaises with parents, pupils, the LA, key workers and others involved in the pupil's care.
- Ensuring the support put in place focusses on and meets the needs of individual pupils.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff with responsibility for supporting pupils with health needs.
- Providing teachers who support pupils with health needs with suitable information relating to a pupil's health condition and the possible effect the condition and/or medication taken has on the pupil.
- Providing a report to the School Board on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place to meet the health needs of pupils.
- Notifying the LA when a pupil is likely to be away from the school for a significant period of time due to their health needs.

**The SENDCO is responsible for:**

- Dealing with pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs.
- Actively monitoring pupil progress and reintegration into school.
- Supplying pupils' education providers with information about the child's capabilities, progress and outcomes.
- Liaising with the Head Teacher, education providers and parents to determine pupils' programmes of study whilst they are absent from school.
- Keeping pupils informed about school events and encouraging communication with their peers.
- Providing a link between pupils and their parents, and the LA.

**Teachers and support staff are responsible for:**

- Understanding confidentiality in respect of pupils' health needs.
- Designing lessons and activities in a way that allows those with health needs to participate fully and ensuring pupils are not excluded from activities that they wish to take part in without a clear evidence-based reason.
- Understanding their role in supporting pupils with health needs and ensuring they attend the required training.
- Ensuring they are aware of the needs of their pupils through the appropriate and lawful sharing of the individual pupil's health needs.
- Ensuring they are aware of the signs, symptoms and triggers of common life-threatening medical conditions and know what to do in an emergency.
- Keeping parents informed of how their child's health needs are affecting them whilst in the school.

**Parents are expected to:**

- Ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where possible.
- Work in partnership with the school to ensure the best possible outcomes for their child.
- Notify the school of the reason for any of their child's absences without delay.
- Provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs.
- Attend meetings to discuss how support for their child should be planned.

**Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and this is incorporated within the Headteacher's termly report to Governors. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be and that any trends are being identified.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The Head Teacher and Office Manager are responsible for monitoring attendance across the school. If there is a longer-term concern about the attendance or punctuality of a particular child contact will be made with the parents or carers.

## Appendix 1

### Punctuality Letter 1

Date

[Parent/Carer Name & Address]

Dear [Parent/Carer]

**Re: [child's name] [class]**

As part of our commitment to improve the attainment of our pupils, we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During this process, we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions. We are therefore, writing to you due to [name of pupil]'s current number of late sessions:

Attendance	%
Number of late sessions	
Number of minutes late	

Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

<b>5 minutes late every day = 3 days of learning lost a year</b>
<b>10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of learning lost a year</b>
<b>15 minutes late every day = 10 days of learning lost a year</b>
<b>20 minutes late every day = 13 days of learning lost a year</b>
<b>30 minutes late every day = 19 days of learning lost a year</b>

We understand that the school mornings can be hectic for many, but when your child is late for school they are missing out on vital parts of their education. If your child arrives after 9.30am, he/she will have an "unauthorised" absence mark which means that he/she will have an unauthorised absence for that morning session. I have enclosed a registration certificate for your information.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me on [office@chilham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@chilham.kent.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

Appendix 2

## Punctuality Letter 2

Date

Name & Address of Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Dear [name(s)]

**Re: Late Attendance – [child's name]**

I refer to the Attendance Officer's letter of [previous letter date] and note that there has been no improvement in [child's name] late arrivals. He/she has continued to regularly arrive late for school and, so far this year been late on [number] occasions.

Our expectation is that all pupils arrive at school by 8.55am at the latest and [child's name]'s is no exception. Arriving even a few minutes late, could potentially cause embarrassment for your child, be disruptive for the class and could mean that your child is regularly missing early work and essential instructions.

Please arrange for [child's name] to arrive in time for the start of school, i.e. before 8.55am.

I will be monitoring [child's name]'s arrival times for the next 3 weeks and will hope to see a significant improvement. IF there is no improvement I will be in touch for a meeting to see the support we need to put into place.

If you have any difficulties in ensuring your child attends school on time, please contact Chloe Arnold to discuss the matter in order that we may consider suitable support if necessary/appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

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Appendix 3

**Attendance Letter 1a**

Date

[Parent/Carer Name & Address]

Dear [name]

**Re: [child's name] [class]**

So far this academic year, [name]'s class register indicates that they have attended school for [amount] % of the time. I have enclosed a registration certificate for your information.

This level of absence is high and I must ask you to ensure that [name] attends school regularly and on time every day. We will continue to monitor your child's attendance closely and hope to see an improvement as the year progresses. Please let me know if there is any way we can support you with this.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Officer

## Appendix 4

### Attendance Letter 1b

Date

[Parent/Carer name & address]

Dear [name]

**Re: [child's name] [(class)]**

I am writing to express concern that [name]'s attendance so far this academic year is only [amount]%. This is well below the national average of 96% and below what we expect. To put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year.

When looking into the reasons why [name] has been absent from school, we noticed that the majority of the absence is linked to illness and/or medical reasons. I attach his/her attendance record since September for your information.

Due to the high level of illness and/or medical absence, I must ask that if any further absence occurs, you should provide evidence to the school that confirms the reason he/she has been absent and is being supported by a GP or other medical professional. Some examples of evidence that could be used are prescriptions, appointment cards, doctor's notes etc. If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised".

I must ask you to ensure that your child attends school regularly every day and on time. We will continue to monitor [name]'s attendance and will be looking forward to an improvement. Please do let us know if you need any support with this.

At Chilham St Mary's CE Primary School, our aim is for your child to reach their full potential and for this to happen, your child needs to attend school regularly and on time. Please do encourage [name] to attend school with minor medical symptoms/ailments as absence from school has a negative impact on learning as well as forming and maintaining friendships.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me on [office@chilham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@chilham.kent.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

## Appendix 5

### Attendance Letter 2

Date

[Parent/Carer Name & Address]

Dear [name]

**Re: [child's name] [class]**

Since the Attendance Officer's letter to you of [date], [name]'s attendance has failed to improve significantly, and is now [number]%. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year.

When looking into the reasons why [name] has been absent from school, we notice that the majority of the absence is linked to illness and/or medical reasons.

Due to the high level of illness and/or medical absence, I must ask that if any further absence occurs, you should provide evidence to the school that shows why the pupil has been absent and that he/she is being supported by a GP or other medical professional. Some examples of evidence that could be used are prescriptions, appointment cards, doctor's notes, etc.

If this evidence is not supplied when your child returns after an illness or medical absence, your child's absence will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence.

This level of absence is high and I must ask you to ensure that your child attends school regularly every day.

We will continue to monitor [name]'s attendance and will be looking forward to a sustained improvement. If [name]'s attendance does not improve we may consider a referral to our Education Welfare Officer.

Please let us know if there is any way we can support you with this.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 6

## **Approved Absence from Learning**

Date

[Parent/Carer Name & Address]

Dear [name]

**Re: xxxx**

Thank you for completing the 'Absence from Learning Request'.

I confirm that your application for leave has been approved by the Headteacher.

This absence will be recorded as an authorised absence on your child's attendance record.

Kind regards,

Miss Dolan

## Appendix 7

### Declined Absence from Learning Letter sent to home address

Date

[Parent/Carer Name & Address]

Dear [name]

Re: **Request for Absence from Learning**

I refer to your 'Absence From Learning Request' to take ( ) out of school for the period ( ) inclusive.

*The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 states that the Head teacher may not authorise any leave of absence during term time (i.e. holiday taken in term time).*

I am unable to authorise this absence from learning as it is not deemed as exceptional leave. Should you go ahead with this absence, a Penalty Notice request will be made to Kent LA who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for taking a child out of school during term time. ***The Penalty Notice is £160 per parent, per child that must be paid within 28 days or £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.***

I trust that this will not be the case and that you make alternative arrangements for your leave during the school holiday period.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

## Appendix 8

### **Requests for Pupil Absence from Learning due to Exceptional Circumstances**

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of that child at the school where he/ she is a registered pupil. Failure to fulfil this duty may result in the Local Authority prosecuting the parents.

The Headteacher reserves the right to make individual judgements as to what constitutes exceptional circumstances. We may ask for confirmation of travel arrangements or other supporting documents.

As a rule, the financial factor when a parent claims that they are unable to afford a holiday during school holidays when prices may be significantly higher than in term time, does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

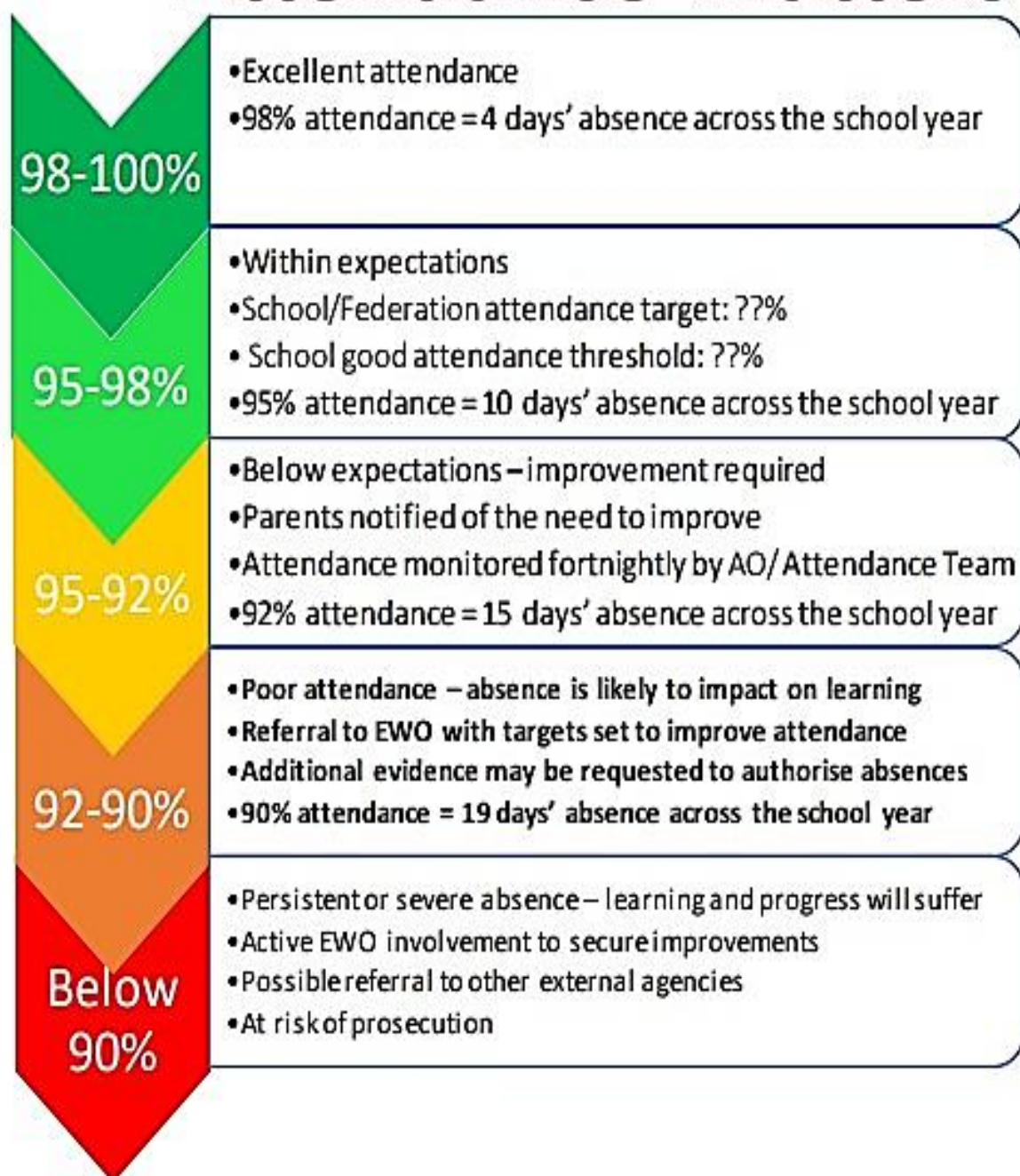
Similarly, the nature of a proposed holiday cannot be taken as exceptional circumstances.

We will not grant exceptional leave if:

- A child's attendance record is less than 96% - even if any previous absence was due to unavoidable causes such as illness.
- The period of leave coincides with the start of term, or is near to or coincides with tests, SATs, exams or other significant events in the school calendar.

## Impact of Attendance over a Year Chart

# Attendance Matters



# Punctuality Matters

