



Charles Dickens Primary School

Toulmin Street, London, SE1 1AF

Headteacher: Mrs Cassie Buchanan MA (Oxon)

Tel: 020-7407-1769

Fax: 020-7403-5324

Email: office@charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk

Web: www.charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy includes updates required to meet the risk assessment for the wider opening of school during the Covid 19 pandemic. The Covid 19 updates at the end of this policy over rides the original policy and is designed to update it during these unprecedented times.

School ethos:

Creativity and excellence are at the heart of everything we do at Charles Dickens Primary School. Children are encouraged to work to the best of their abilities. However, we also want them to have lots of fun along the way. In order to enrich our exciting and diverse curriculum, we offer a continually expanding range of first hand learning experiences and extra-curricular activities, tailored to meet the needs of children at different stages of their school career. We believe that it is important that our classrooms look and feel vibrant and alive and that the creativity exudes from our displays and the presentations and performances of our children. All our children will always make or exceed national expectations of progress and all the staff will support their determination and ambition with outstanding teaching. We want all of our children to be happy and resilient which we encourage through our Pastoral lessons and Happiness assemblies. Through every strand of school life, we aim to promote the spiritual, moral and cultural development of every child, alongside the academic, to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges that life offers.

AIMS

- We want all the children to benefit from regular and punctual attendance, so that they have full access to the curriculum we provide; problems are identified and acted upon as quickly as possible.
- We want parents and carers to have a clear understanding of their own responsibilities and those of the school community.

EXPECTATIONS

We expect that children will:

- attend school regularly
- arrive on time
- feel able to tell a member of staff if there is a family problem with regular and punctual attendance

We expect that all parents and carers will:

ensure their children attend school every day and arrive in school between 8:45am and 9am ready to start their learning

contact the school by 9.15am on the first day of any absence to explain the reason why



Email office@charlesdickens.southwark.sch.uk

not arrange family holidays to take place during term time

provide the school with up-to-date contact numbers so that they can easily be reached at any time during the school day

inform the school in confidence about any problem which might affect their child's attendance or punctuality

Parents and carers can expect that the school will:

record their children's attendance regularly, accurately and efficiently

make every reasonable effort to contact the child's parent or carer when their child fails to attend school without good reason

deal discreetly and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent or carer

make all efforts to encourage regular attendance and excellent punctuality

instigate proper enquiries before removing the child from the school roll

ensure that all families, children, staff and governors are familiar with our policy and procedures

PROMOTING GOOD

ATTENDANCE We will encourage good attendance by :

accurately completing attendance registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon

following up absence on the first day

undertaking regular attendance checks

informing parents and carers if the child's attendance is a cause for concern

alerting parents and carers at the beginning of the school year of the importance of building a good record in attendance, which will feature on the child's end of year report

year 5 parents to know that the attendance record may influence a child's selection for some secondary schools



giving parents and carers an indication at half termly intervals of the accumulating record if there is a cause for concern.

including attendance targets at parents evenings

teaching children to value good attendance, and praising them when there is an improvement in attendance particularly where there has been a problem in the past

awarding weekly pupil attendance stickers

TERM TIME HOLIDAY REQUESTS

The school does not authorise term time holiday. The Head teacher has the discretion to authorise a short period of absence which is due to exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances will be interpreted as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss

of teaching time. While decisions will be made on a case by case basis, requests will normally be refused. Any long period unauthorised absence will result in the pupil being taken off roll in partnership with the school EWO. The family will then have to reapply for a place on their return.

PENALTY NOTICES

Since 1st June 2014, the local authority have been issuing penalty notices for unauthorised term time holiday. The penalty notices will begin at £60 and increase over time if not paid. If there should be a second unauthorised absence, this could then lead to a prosecution.

Unauthorised term time holiday is where a request for a holiday or absence is refused by the school or if holiday is taken without requesting permission from the school but it can be shown that the parent or carer understood that permission would not have been granted if requested.

The penalty notices will also be issued if families deliberately delay the return from a holiday without prior permission. Where penalty notices are not paid within a 28 day period, the local authority will prosecute under Section 444a of the Education Act 1996.

If the school feels that a family meets these criteria it will refer them to the Early Help Service who will then send the case to panel and they will decide if a fine is to be issued. Payment of a Penalty Notice within 21 days of receipt is £60 and payment after this time, but within 28 days of receipt, is £120. Only one Penalty Notice can be issued to a family per academic year but a second Penalty Notice may lead to prosecution by the Local Authority.



RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

If school have not received a reason for absence by 9:15am, then the following procedure will be followed:

1. The school will telephone the first name on the contact list.
2. If there is no response school will ring numbers on the contact list, until a reply is received.
3. If school have had no response, a home visit will be made if possible, by either school staff or other agencies working with the family.
4. School will contact the Police if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child.

The Attendance Officer will print off weekly attendance reports and analyse with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and School Welfare Team. They look for any 1 day patterns, persistent absences or attendance that is below 90%.

It is our routine procedure to:

- contact the parent by telephone on the first day of unauthorised absence. Failing that a home visit will take place, where possible.
- inform education welfare of any continuing unexplained absence
- categorise an absence as unauthorised until such time as an acceptable explanation is received
- follow up any pattern of non attendance detected by the school and/or by education welfare checks
- send a letter for parent to meet with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) and put a copy of this letter in the pupil's file and the absence letter file
- the school will analyse the impact of poor attendance on attainment

School reopening on the 1st June

The school will reopen to Reception and Nursery children on 1st June. Then on the 8th June, Year One may be invited to attend however this will only happen if the school continues to risk assess the increased numbers as low risk. After an evaluation process, Year 6 could be invited in on 15th June if it can also be assessed as low risk. The school will continue to accommodate children where both parents are key workers or the main care giver is a key worker and a single parent.

- Parents must inform the school if they wish their child to return.
- The parents and children must abide by the timings of the school day and ensure they socially distance upon entry to the school.
- Attendance at the school is not compulsory as children can continue to learn virtually from home.
- There will be no fines for non-attendance to school.

- If you have informed the school that you would like an in school place, then you must abide by the previous absence reporting of informing the school if your child is unwell or unable to attend the school.

The above amendments are based upon the guidance from the DFE (May 2020) and will be updated or removed when this advice changes.

If a child continues to be persistently absent the parents will attend a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team, Attendance Officer and EWO. If there is no sustained improvement then the school will follow the proper legal channels.



ORGANISATION

In order for this policy to be successful every member of staff makes attendance a high priority and conveys this to the children. **See attached sheet for specific responsibilities.**

REVIEW

This policy will be subject to evaluation and review and subject to changes in local and national policy.

Policy document information: (recommended policy not statutory)	
Reviewed by: HEAD/ CF&C	Responsibility: HEAD
Adopted: 2013	Last reviewed: April 2018
Review Cycle:	Every 3 years – April 2021
Signature (Head only)	

Updated April 2018

