

# Clarice Cliff Primary School



## Attendance Policy 2009

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# CLARICE CLIFF PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY 2009

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Clarice Cliff Primary School is committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. One of the many ways we do this is by promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Our school is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit fully from education then good attendance and punctuality are crucial.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Pupils will know that their presence is important and we will offer an environment in which they feel valued and welcome. We recognise parents play a vital role and we will establish strong home-school links and communications systems with them.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate success and attendance is a critical contributory factor. We will actively promote and encourage full attendance for all our pupils. There are a variety of reward schemes in place to promote and encourage good attendance and punctuality. The Home School agreement which is signed by staff, parents and the pupil, contains a section which is specifically relating to attendance and punctuality.

This policy has been written in a child friendly way and has been discussed with, and agreed by the School Council as well as staff, Governors and other agencies.

### Parental Responsibility

Under Section 44 of the Education Act of 1996, parents or those with parental responsibility for children of school age, are required to ensure that their children are in receipt of full time education. Children are required to attend and stay at school.

This responsibility also extends to ensuring that the children attend school regularly, punctually, suitably dressed and in a fit condition to learn.

Attendance issues will be raised through Parents' Evenings, newsletters and in cases of non-compliance via the Education Welfare Service.

Parents will be promptly informed over any concerns regarding attendance and given the opportunity to discuss these matters with the Head Teacher and if appropriate the Education Welfare Officer.

It is also the parent's responsibility to inform school of the reasons for their child's non-attendance as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

#### Procedures for reporting absence

By telephone or Text message - parents should ensure they have the school phone number.

By letter

In person

By showing an appointment card or letter

By filling in a leave of absence form (in advance)

By informing staff

#### Authorised absence

The head teacher has the ultimate responsibility for authorising absences and will do so when a valid reason is given for the child's absence. A pupil's absence from school will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received.

#### Unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence will be given when a child does not attend school and a valid reason is not given for their absence, or the Governors refuse to authorise a holiday request.

#### Medical and dental appointments

We expect parents to make medical and dental appointments for their children before or after school or during the school holidays. If this is not possible then authorisation will be given where confirmation of the appointment is received via one

of the methods already listed. A signing in/out book is kept in the office. Children are expected to attend school prior to the appointment and parents are expected to return their children to school following the appointment whenever possible.

### Special occasions

A request for a child to attend a special occasion during school time, e.g. family wedding must be made in advance and the Head Teacher will make the decision as whether to authorise the absence. Parents will be notified of the Head's decision.

### Bereavement

The school is sensitive to family requests for a child's attendance at funerals or associated events. The Head Teacher will offer the family advice over absence in this instance.

### Days of Religious Observance

Up to three days attendance at a religious observance held by a religious body will be granted as an authorised absence. The Head Teacher should be consulted in advance of the event. Where more than three days per academic year is required then a leave of absence form should be submitted for authorisation.

### Family Holidays

**The Governing Body requests that parents make every effort not to arrange holidays during school terms.**

In exceptional circumstances, and by prior application, the Governing Body may authorise up to 10 working days within any school year, taking into account the child's attendance record. Holiday means that the child is residing away from home e.g. abroad or in another part of the country. Where permission has been given for a holiday and it is later found out that the child spent the time at home this will then be counted as an unauthorised absence. Where holidays take the absence over 10 working days, within a school year, the other days will be classed as an unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence will be monitored by the headteacher and EWO. Leave of absence request forms are available from the school office.

## Lateness

Children can get very easily upset when they arrive late at school after the bell has gone. This causes them distress and also they miss the start of numeracy and literacy which is a very important part of their education.

Children are expected to arrive punctually for the start of the school day. Key stage 2 at 9.00am and foundation stage and key stage 1 at 9.05am. Registration is between 9.05 and 9.15am. The school gates are locked at 9.15 am and children arriving after this must report to the school office, where they will be registered via the late book. The registers will be closed at 9.15am children that arrive after this time will be given a late mark. Any child arriving after 9.30am will be given an unauthorised absence mark in the register. After persistent late marks parents will be given an informal warning. The Education Welfare Officer will become involved if the problem continues.

## School Procedures

In managing the attendance and punctuality of its pupils the school will:

### Keep appropriate attendance records

Registers are taken at the beginning of each am and pm session. Marks are transferred onto the schools computerised system. Accurate information on attendance is available to designated staff and data gathered will be used to inform the Governing Body of attendance and punctuality trends.

### Reporting Absence

When a child's absence has not been reported the school will contact the parents, via text or phone call, on the first day of absence, promoting partnership with parents re: attendance and punctuality.

### Monitor Patterns of Attendance

The Head Teacher in liaison with the attendance team and the EWO, will regularly review registers and late book in order to work with families whose patterns of attendance or punctuality are causing concerns. All parents will be informed, via the annual report and assessment profiles, of their child's overall attendance and their attendance compared to the average for the school. The head teacher and governors

monitor attendance on a termly basis. The EWO monitors whole school attendance monthly, termly, and annually, through regular meetings with the headteacher and the attendance team. The DCSF publish attendance data annually via the Raise on Line reports.

The school encourages good attendance through clear communication with parents including leaflets about the effects of non-attendance or regular lateness.

If there is cause for concern then the following procedures will be followed:

- A letter will be sent home to parents of all children whose attendance falls below 90%
- If attendance falls below 85% without good reason, then any illness, or absence, will not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.
- When a child's attendance falls below 80% then a referral is made into the education welfare service.

#### Rewards and incentives

- A display in main hall for the class with the best weekly attendance.
- Trip out/gift for the class with the best annual attendance.
- Certificate/gift for all children with 100% presented termly.
- Attendance postcards will be sent out to target families whose attendance improves.