

## Canterbury Cross Primary School Attendance Policy

### 1) Introduction

1.1) The school has a duty to every child to ensure they receive their FULL LEGAL entitlement to education to allow each child to reach their potential.

The Staff and Governing Body at Canterbury Cross Primary School give a high priority to its pupils' educational achievement and believe that maximum pupil attendance and punctuality are essential in order for all children to achieve their full potential. This policy has been introduced in order to help achieve this aim and the staff and governors are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that it is effectively and appropriately implemented.

1.2) Whole school attendance targets are set annually in consultation with the Education Social Worker and the Governing Body and the Local Authority monitor these closely.

### 2) Holidays requests/ Term time absence

2.1) There are strong and proven links between pupil attendance and educational achievement. Attendance of less than 95% (i.e. absences of 9.5 days or more out of the 190 pupil days in the school year) has been shown to compromise pupil attainment. At 90% attendance pupils miss the equivalent of almost 4 weeks education (19 days) and only 10% of pupils who are persistently absent from school achieve 5 A-C grades at GCSE.

**2.2) Taking ANY holiday during term time is NOT permitted. Changes to government legislation in 2013 have removed the power for a Head Teacher to authorise ANY extended leave.**

2.3) The school acknowledges that extended visits to the country of family origin provide important opportunities to reaffirm family, linguistic and cultural identities and recognises that these can be positive personal and educational experiences. However there is strong evidence to indicate that where such visits result in significant absence from school during term time, the disruption to the child's education can have a negative impact on his/ her educational attainment. Children receive 12 weeks holiday a year where these visits can take place.

2.4) Information for parents/carers which clarifies their legal responsibilities regarding attendance and highlights the impact of absences during term-time will be made available each year to all parents/carers through, as part of parent evenings, in the school's prospectus and through new parent and pupil induction.

### 3) Absence in exceptional circumstances

3.1) The Head Teacher may, on rare occasions, make a judgement that there are genuine and exceptional circumstances pertaining to an application to take a pupil out of school during term. For example:

- Death of parent or sibling
- Life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling

3.2) Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interests of the child nor wholly appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. School and school friendships and relationships can provide children with stability and care during difficult times. The routine of school can provide a safe and familiar background to life during times of upheaval. However, where the Head Teacher judges there to be genuine and pressing reasons for a child to be absent during term-time, they may agree up to a maximum of 10 consecutive days absence once in a child's school life.

Granting such a block of leave will be an absolute exception.

3.3) Where a child is missing from school for 10 consecutive days with no reason from parents or they have been taken on an unauthorised holiday the school will start deregistration proceedings. The child will be removed from the register and reported to Educational Welfare as a "Child Missing from Education."

#### **4) Procedures for Lateness**

4.1) Children who arrive after 8.55am for any reason other than medical will be marked late. Any child arriving after 10.30am without a reason or explanation from parents will be marked unauthorised absence for that session.

4.2) Parents must sign out children who have to leave during the school day. School administrative staff will witness this.

#### **5) Strategies for maximising attendance**

5.1) A Reward system is in place that celebrates 100% attendance. Each half term children with 100% attendance receive a golden ticket which is a chance to win a bike at the end of the year. At the end of the year a child who has achieved 100% attendance for the year receives a medal.

5.2) The school runs spot light on attendance schemes. All parents will be notified at the start of a year in writing about this procedure. The procedure is very clear and states that school will take legal action against parents with children who are persistently absent.

5.3) Attendance and punctuality will be promoted through assemblies and newsletters.

5.4) If a child's attendance level drops below 92%, school will commence close monitoring of that child's attendance level.

5.5) If a child's attendance level drops below 95% the School will commence the Spotlight procedures as stated in the guidance.

## **6) Summary of Responsibilities**

6.1) Parents will:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly in accordance with the signed whole school agreement.
- Notify the school by phone/letter by 9am on the first day of any absence (e.g. sickness/ family emergency). If no message is received the school will send out a text Via Truancy call. If no valid reason is given the child will receive an unauthorised absence.

6.2) The Leadership Team will:

- Monitor attendance and, where concerns are identified, consult with parents/ outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues.
- In consultation with LA and Governors, set annual targets for attendance.
- Inform governors of attendance data through head teacher reports.
- Inform parents of attendance percentages for their pupil/s at the end of the school year.
- Promote and reward excellent attendance by pupils.

6.3) Class Teachers will:

- Ensure that registers are taken at the start of each session.
- Report any concerns relating to attendance to the Leadership Team.

6.4) School Attendance Administrator will:

- Input attendance data on a daily basis
- Print off class data each month for monitoring by the Leadership Team.
- Support the Leadership Team in monitoring and identifying levels of absence/lateness causing concern.
- Collate relevant data in the event of legal action against parents.

6.5) The Education Welfare Service:

- Support the school to develop strategies to meet attendance targets.
- Support and represent the school at Legal proceedings.

6.6) The Governing Body will:

- Using the School Profile, report to parent's levels of attendance including authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Through the relevant committee annually review the attendance policy