

CULVERHILL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2016

RATIONALE

Culverhill School believes that consistent attendance at school enables pupils to maximise their rate of progress and that absence from school hinders development thus preventing pupils from achieving their potential. We therefore have systems set up within to school to monitor attendance carefully and also work with our LA Education Welfare Officer when needed as part of a contract shared with Warmley Park and New Siblands Special schools.

PURPOSES

- (1) To explain the responsibilities of the school.
- (2) To explain the responsibilities of parents/guardians.

GUIDELINES

1. All schools are required to keep a detailed record of attendance and to publish the attendance figures in the school brochure and annual report. The school is also required to send attendance figures to the Government for further publication.
2. Schools have to distinguish between AUTHORISED and UNAUTHORISED absences.
3. The school is required to mark registers twice a day, in the morning and again in the afternoon. This staff now do electronically using SIMS.
4. The school has to keep a record of the reasons for pupil absence. When a pupil has been absent, a note of explanation should be given/sent to his or her tutor on returning to school.
5. Pupils' attendance will be collated and records will be kept on a computer database.
6. The school also has a policy of contacting parents if no explanations are given for absence (first day call).
7. The school is required to inform South Glos of any concerns over unauthorised absences, and this could result in the LA Education Welfare Officer becoming involved.
8. Penalty notices will be issued in line with South Gloucestershire policy and procedures following consultation with the school's education welfare officer.
9. Parents must note and respond to the Government attendance regulations that medical, dental and family holidays as far as possible should be arranged in school holidays or out of school hours.
10. Staff will be vigilant in all attendance matters and reward pupils for good attendance e.g. praise, certificates, annual trophy etc.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

- Sickness or any unavoidable cause.
- Religious observation by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- The death of a close relative.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

- Any absence for which no explanation has been given or absences which the school feels that it cannot authorise (ie family holidays which go over the 5 days maximum authorised by the school).

Attendance rates	Overall attendance	Authorised absences	Unauthorised absences	Less than 85%
2014-15	92.53 (FSM 89.6 LAC 95.6)	7.01 (FSM 9.5 LAC 4.3)	0.4 (FSM 0.8 LAC 0)	9 pupils (5 mental health-CAMHS referrals made, 3 complex medical needs, 1 resolved by safeguarding referral)
2015-16	92.52 (FSM 89.9 LAC 98.31)	7.02 (FSM 9.55 LAC 1.64)	0.47 (FSM 0.56 LAC 0.05)	14 pupils (8 medical needs, 1 mental health, 3 safeguarding referrals inc 1 traveller child, 1 family holiday/cultural, 1 induction plan)
Parents/carers report that pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above national norms with extremely low persistent absence rates- SEF Sept 2016.				

REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

The granting of requests for absence during term time is always a thorny problem. At Culverhill we believe that full and regular attendance at school is a vital factor in achieving a successful education, and we therefore do everything we can to promote it. Requests for absence during term time have become more common in recent years and, by breaking the pattern of full attendance, cause real disruption to individuals' educational progress. Equally, of course, there are some exceptional occasions when an absence can bring considerable educational benefit to a young person. Whilst generally discouraging term time absences, we attempt to strike a sensitive balance and this paper explains our policy and the background to it.

LEGISLATION All leave for holidays is at the discretion of the school and not an automatic entitlement. The basic framework is contained in paragraphs 8(3) and 8(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations of 1995 which state:

- 8(3) Subject to paragraph (4), on application made by a parent or carer with whom the pupil normally resides, a pupil may be granted leave of absence in order to go away on holiday.
- 8(4) Save in exceptional circumstances, a pupil shall not in pursuance of paragraph (3) be granted more than ten school days leave of absence in any school year.

REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE These should be made:

- On the official school form.

- Well in advance of the proposed absence, and well before any bookings are made.
- By the parent or carer “with whom the pupil normally resides”. This covers the situation of children who are looked after or whose parents are separated or divorced, and who wish to go on holiday with the other parent or other relative. The parent with care should always make the request on behalf of the other parent or relative, in order to avoid any subsequent misunderstandings or disputes.

The school will consider each request for absence on its merits, but general principles are:

- a) Headteachers are permitted to grant leave of absence in order that a pupil may take part in a family holiday which cannot take place during school holidays because a parent is unable to arrange leave from work to coincide. The fact that holidays are cheaper during term time is not regarded as a valid reason for missing education.
- b) Where leave is granted, one week of term time per school year shall be regarded as sufficient.
- c) Leave will not normally be granted for pupils to go on holiday with friends or friends’ parents.
- d) No leave will be granted during year 10 or 11 examination period.
- e) Modular exams, coursework requirements and tight teaching schedules mean that any absence during years 10-11 is very disruptive and parents are urged not to request leave during these important periods of their children’s education.
- f) Leave will not be granted to pupils who already have poor attendance records.
- g) In some cases, such as an extended visit to relatives abroad, a trip may bring considerable educational benefit to the child. In such cases we might wish to discuss how the trip could be used as part of an educational programme, perhaps by setting work to be done whilst away, or asking for a project to be completed on return.

ROLE OF ATTENDANCE CLERK (ANNE AYRES) FROM SEPTEMBER 2016:

1. Check registers have been completed accurately (daily)
2. In case of pupil absence text then ring home if no message received
3. Follow up unauthorised absences with class tutor/team and report to safeguarding lead (Sally Clark) if no satisfactory explanation given
4. Respond to LAC welfare calls from other LAs (weekly)
5. Report pupils with less than 85% attendance to School Business Manager (Wendy Weaver) for discussion at SLT/or with Headteacher (termly).
6. Prepare certificates for pupils with 100% attendance on a termly basis.

Miss N. Jones 8.11.16 Reviewed and approved by governors 24.11.16



REQUEST FOR ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Before completing this request form, parents are asked to refer to the notes of guidance overleaf. Completed forms should be returned to the pupil's tutor well in advance of the proposed absence, and well before any booking is made.

Permission is requested for the absence of: (please list all pupils in your family for whom you are requesting leave).

Name: _____ (tutor group _____)

Name: _____ (tutor group _____)

from _____ to _____ inclusive

Please give below details of the special circumstances which require absence from school during term time: **If this section is not completed permission will be refused.**

Signature of parent or guardian: _____ Date: _____

FOR COMPLETION BY FORM TUTOR:

Previous attendance record is: **good / satisfactory / poor**
(100-95%) (94-85%) (<85%)

The proposed dates coincide with:

Any previous request for absence in term time during this school year:

Form tutor's signature: _____

SCHOOL DECISION:

Permission for the above absence is: **granted / refused.**

If the school refuses to authorise the proposed absence and you still choose to go ahead, the school may request the Education Welfare Service to consider issuing you with a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine).

If permission has been refused the reason is:

Signed: _____ Headteacher

CULVERHILL SCHOOL REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

Guidance for parents and carers

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LEGISLATION Firstly, it may surprise parents to know that all leave for holidays is at the discretion of the school and not an automatic entitlement. The basic framework is contained in paragraphs 8(3) and 8(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations of 1995 which state:

- 8(3) Subject to paragraph (4), on application made by a parent or carer with whom the pupil normally resides, a pupil may be granted leave of absence in order to go away on holiday.
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SCHOOL POLICY The school will consider each request for absence on its merits, but general principles are:

- h) Headteachers are permitted to grant leave of absence in order that a pupil may take part in a family holiday in exceptional circumstances only. The fact that holidays are cheaper during term time is not regarded as a valid reason for missing education.
- i) Where leave is granted, one week of term time per school year shall be regarded as sufficient.
- j) Leave will not normally be granted for pupils to go on holiday with friends or friends' parents.
- k) No leave will be granted during year 10 or 11 examination period.
- l) Modular exams, coursework requirements and tight teaching schedules mean that any absence during years 10-11 is very disruptive and parents are urged not to request leave during these important periods of their children's education.
- m) Leave will not be granted to pupils who already have poor attendance records.
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AND FINALLY We hope you will find this guidance useful and feel able to support us in our attempts to provide the best possible education for your child. Please avoid any requests for absence in term time which are not absolutely necessary, and do all you can to reinforce the habit of punctuality and full attendance which have such a powerful impact on educational progress.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss specific plans or concerns.
Miss N Jones – Headteacher