



# Attendance Policy

Owner:	Jo Evans
Date Ratified:	Jan 25 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Ratified by:	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Date Policy to be reviewed:	Summer 2024

## 1. Introduction and Aims

Claycots School Partnership holds the following values at the heart of our community and aims to embed these values in all that we do. The Attendance Policy relates directly to the application of these values in our school partnership.

- Respect
- Kindness
- Curiosity
- Integrity

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

The school has used the DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance May 2022 guidance, the Government's Opportunity for All March 2022 and SBC's Attendance Service Procedural Guidance to inform the following policy.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education and for this to be the case, Claycots School believes that children should be in school every day. We aim to:

- Ensure that every child is safeguarded and has their right to education protected.
- Encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- Monitor attendance and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism.
- Acknowledge and celebrate a successful attendance record and improved attendance.
- Ensure a consistent approach throughout the school from all staff.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
- Ensure that the school community receive regular communication about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

### Why is good attendance so important?

- There is a link between poor attendance and under achievement.
- Pupils who have good attendance enjoy all the social benefits of school.
- It is important that pupils start school with good attendance and punctuality habits that they will need for secondary school and the workplace.
- We provide attendance information to secondary schools. This also includes any appeals to grammar schools.
- As a parent or carer, you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child receives a full-time education. Failure to do so could lead to fines or even a community or custodial sentence.
- We will systematically follow up any concerns about attendance working in partnership with Slough Borough Council's Attendance Service.
- Our school will use Fixed Penalty Notices if necessary to improve attendance.

175 NON SCHOOL DAYS EVERY YEAR = 175 DAYS TO SPEND ON HOLIDAYS, FAMILY TIME AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS					
190 SCHOOL DAYS IN A YEAR					
	10 days absent	12 days absent	19 days absent	20 days absent	38 days absent
190 days at school	180 days at school	178 days at school	171 days at school	170 days at school	152 days at school
100%	95%	94%	90%	> 90%	80%
EXPECTED Best chance of success		CONCERN Less chance of successful learning		PERSISTENT ABSENCE Action needed	

## 2. Expectations

The school is using the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance September 2022 document to inform its practice in improving attendance levels and reducing persistent absenteeism.

The expectation at Claycots school is that your children will be in school for 100% of the time.

**The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Year 6 will have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment.**

The Senior Leader who has responsibility for the strategic approach to attendance at Claycots school is Jo Evans and she can be contacted on [j.evans@claycots.com](mailto:j.evans@claycots.com). It will be her responsibility to monitor the impact of this policy and to ensure that all staff, pupils and parents understand the expectations of them.

A child will be deemed to be persistently absent if they are away from school for 10% of sessions. Parents should expect to be contacted by the school, in whichever format the school deems appropriate, if their child falls into this category or monitoring shows that they may in the future.

A child will be deemed to be severely absent if they are away from school for 50% of sessions. Parents should expect to be contacted and invited into school if their child falls into this category as it is likely that support will be required.

### **Punctuality**

Your child is required to be in school punctually each day. This means that they need to be on the playground, ready to enter their classroom at 8.35 am. Any children who arrive at school after 8.45 am are deemed to be late and will need to come into school via the main office at each campus. If you bring your child into school after 9 am then the lateness will be recorded as unauthorised.



All parents who attend with their children when late will be required to complete a form with their details. Due to the pressures on the school kitchen, any children arriving at school late (to include medical appointments etc) will receive a jacket potato option only.

### **Sickness Absence**

There may be occasions when your child is too unwell to attend school and, on those occasions, you should call or email ([attendance@claycots.com](mailto:attendance@claycots.com)) into school by 8.00 am and provide details of the sickness and the likely period of time their child is away from school.

Parents who have concerns about their child's attendance or who require support to get their children to school should contact the Attendance Manager for support.

Where you have not been in contact with the school to explain your child's absence, the school will make efforts to contact you. Firstly, a text will be sent to you asking you to contact the school. If you do not do this, then a member of the school's Attendance team will telephone you. If the school is still unable to gain contact from you after 3 days, a home visit will be carried out. Any concerns about the safety of children with regards to attendance will be recorded on the school's Safeguarding Management system, CPOMs and dealt with by a suitable member of staff.

A child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no satisfactory explanation is given for absence or if the school considers the information received from a parent is not an acceptable reason for an absence.

If your child has 10 sessions (5 days) days' of unauthorised absence in any 12 week period then you will become subject to a warning period from Slough Borough Council.

Please note that we have the same expectations for all children in our school. Penalty notices cannot be issued for non-statutory school aged children; however, parents are at risk of losing their child's school place if attendance continues to be a concern and where there is a waiting list.

Please also note that a home visit may be carried out at any point if the school thinks that a child could be at risk.

### **Pupils with medical conditions or SEND**

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include children who suffer from long term medical conditions or have SEND. The school understands that you may require more support with your child if this is the case and you should contact the school's SENCO for further information and assistance. Please see the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy.

### **Withdrawal from Learning During Term Time (Leave of Absence)**

There have been an increased number of absences, specifically before and after a school holiday.

- If a child is ill directly before or after a school holiday, the school will ask for medical evidence. If medical evidence is not provided, the absence will be unauthorised and may be subject to a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.
- Claycots School **will not** authorise any leave of absence during term time as directed by the Department for Education - DfE.

- In extreme circumstances the Headteacher may consider an individual request taking into account the attendance and punctuality of the child/ren. The school will ask for evidence such as flight confirmation and other relevant supporting information for the absence request to be considered by the Headteacher.
- The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and are available on the website and from the school office. Family holidays need to be booked within these dates and are not deemed extreme circumstances.
- Requests for compassionate leave will only ever be authorised for periods of 5 days or less (one school week).
- If you take your child out of school for longer than this or you take your child out of school when your request has been declined, you will be subject to a fine which is issued by Slough Borough Council.
- If parents take their children out of school more than once during the academic year, the Local Authority can issue 2 Penalty Notices per year, per parent, per child.

### 3. **Monitoring**

The Attendance Team at Claycots comprises of Senior Leaders, the Attendance Managers, the Safeguarding Manager, Family Support Workers and members of the Office team. This team monitors attendance closely so that we can ensure that any patterns are identified quickly and intervention put in place to support parents and children to improve attendance.

Any absences where children are deemed to be vulnerable (CP, CIN plans etc) will be dealt with by the Safeguarding Manager whose team will follow up. Details will be recorded in SIMs and other documents as appropriate.

The Attendance Team will review Claycots Absence Management System, SIMs and any associated documents on at least a monthly basis. Escalation for children causing concern will be discussed and actions and persons responsible will be agreed. Measures to be taken may include texts and letters to remind parents of the expectations, meetings with the Attendance Manager, Family Support Workers, Deputy Head Teachers or Headteacher and in cases where further support is required, a referral to the Attendance Service at Slough Borough Council will be made.

#### **The Attendance Service can:**

- Arrange formal meetings to discuss attendance concerns and set targets for improvement.
- Issue fines- currently £120 per parent, per child
- Take legal action that could lead to imprisonment.

The Business Manager will report data to SLT each week.

The Head Teacher will provide regular updates to Governors re whole school attendance and will provide an annual end of year report.

#### 4. **Understanding**

Claycots understands that many of our families face significant challenges in getting their children to attend school. While our expectation is that every child attends school every day, we recognise that we need to understand the barriers to attendance some of our families are experiencing and agree how we can work together to resolve them.

Members of the Attendance Team will work hard to build and maintain good relationships with parents and carers so that individual situations are understood.

#### 5. **Support**

If any family is experiencing any issues with attendance then they should contact the school's Attendance Manager as soon as possible. Once the school understands the issue, the parent can be directed to the most appropriate person to provide support.

The school provides support to all parents by running a free of charge breakfast club that is offered on a drop in basis. The provision will be supervised by members of the school staff. It can be accessed from 8.10 am each day and children will receive a free and nutritious breakfast.

The Safeguarding Manager and the Family Support Workers will provide regular opportunities for parents to come into school to discuss any issues they have and the team will provide appropriate guidance and support. This can be through support with family routines or with behaviour at home, as well as support understanding SEN needs and relevant strategies for parents.

#### 6. **Formalised Support**

Where absence persists and the support the school is providing is not working or parents are not engaging, the Attendance Service at Slough Borough Council will be contacted. This may result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice or enforcement proceedings under section 444 (1) or section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996.

#### 7. **Enforce**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, the school will enforce attendance through statutory intervention such as social care involvement or where all other routes have failed, you may be considered for prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

#### 8. **Promoting Good Attendance**

The school has introduced a range of incentives for attendance from September 2022.

Children will be celebrated for 100% attendance by:

1. Half termly certificates and prizes with a range to be collected (badge, stickers, ruler, pencil and wristbands)
2. Annually all children who have attended will receive a balloon and entry into a draw to win incentives.
3. Children with the most improved attendance (from the previous year), will also receive certificates and prizes.
4. Successes will be celebrated through assemblies and the Parent newsletters.