

Chuter Ede Primary School



~ Attendance Policy ~

Autumn 2024

SMILE

A Chuter Ede SMILE reflects our ethos and is central to the planning, delivery and assessment of our whole curriculum. Through each and every subject, children learn the importance of **speaking, moving, imagining, learning and exploring**. By understanding the children within their classes, teachers plan, deliver and assess lessons that harness the strengths and preferences of their children and support their further development. In this way potential is realised.

Written by	SLT
Ratified by	The Governing Body
Date for Review	Autumn 2025



CHUTER EDE PRIMARY SCHOOL- ATTENDANCE POLICY

Chuter Ede Primary School is committed to working with, and supporting parents/carers and children to ensure that every child achieves the highest level of school attendance. Chuter Ede, in conjunction with the Local Authority (LA), is also committed to working in partnership with other agencies who can contribute to an holistic approach to improving school attendance, and will ensure that all other relevant agencies are engaged in the support of particularly vulnerable children and groups, including Traveller children and children who are in local authority care.

Legal Requirements

Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive full time education. The Education Act 2002 places the responsibility for enforcing school attendance on the LA. Legal action will be instigated against parents/carers in relevant circumstances using the wide range of available options including:

- penalty notices
- school attendance orders
- section 444(1) and (1)(a) of the Education Act 2002

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent. Any absences should be explained, verbally or in writing to the school office with, if possible, the predicted date of return. Parents should contact the school at the earliest opportunity on each day of unexpected absence.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. In all cases where a child is reluctant to attend, school should be contacted so that a solution can be quickly sought.

School have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more to the LA Children Missing Officer, where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child.



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Cases of pupil absence of 10 days or more, where the whereabouts of the child is known, but there is no engagement with the school, meet the threshold for Early Help through the Family Service.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing on the morning of which the absence takes place.

Registers are closed 15 minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Any child arriving after this time will be marked in the register as late to school.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily; for example for their birthday, to buy clothes / shoes or if a sibling is ill.
- Truancy.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Education Authority, who will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings to prosecute the parents or issue a Parenting Order, Education Supervision Order, School Attendance Order or fine.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the LA themselves to ask for help or information.



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When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, action will be taken by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issue could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts, etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or a medical appointment, which must be in school time.

HOLIDAY ABSENCE

Holidays in term time are actively discouraged by the school and the County Council Education Service.

Holidays in term time are not a right and will not automatically be granted.

Leave will rarely be authorised by the school and will only ever be granted where proper procedures have been followed and the permission given.

Leave of absence will not be granted retrospectively.

It remains a discretionary power of the head teacher to authorize leave of absence.

A request for your child to leave school during school time must be made on a Leave of Absence Form, which is available from the School Office. Each request for leave of absence is considered individually.

At Chuter Ede Primary School we discourage the taking of any leave of absence during term time.

ATTENDANCE TARGETS

Chuter Ede Primary School Attendance Target is 96.5%. Individual classes have a target of 96.5%. All children should strive to achieve 100% attendance.

MONITORING ARRANGMENTS

Although the law distinguishes between authorised and unauthorised absence, it is the overall attendance of pupils that is crucial. Targets for reducing absence have been set with all schools and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The LA also has a target to reduce absence that will be monitored annually.

In order to monitor the level of pupils' attendance, each school will be asked to provide the LA with termly data. This data will inform the LA on the progress being made in achieving the targets to improve the overall attendance in LA schools. From 2006



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(secondary) and 2007 (primary) individual pupil attendance data will be collected as part of the national school census survey which is collected via the Research and Development team and submitted to the DfES. An annual report will be provided to the Education and Lifelong Learning Select Committee about the level of attendance in the LA schools.

We monitor our attendance closely and will make contact with parents if attendance becomes an issue. The persistent absence threshold is 90%, in line with DfE recommendations. If your child falls below this, the expectation is that parents will work closely with us to resolve the situation.

SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high level of attendance as possible.