

# Codicote C of E Primary School



## Attendance Policy

This policy reflects current legislation. It was reviewed and updated in July 2024.

### Aims

Good attendance helps all children to maximise their learning. At Codicote Primary School, we aim to encourage and support pupils in achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality so that they are able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

### Target Setting

At Codicote School we set targets for attendance in accordance with DFE expectations. The annual target is the total absences expected in the school year, expressed as a percentage of the total possible attendance by pupils at the school.

Where children's attendance fall below 95% for the term, parents are contacted by letter.

### Expectations

#### School

Codicote School will:

- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance.
- Follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality.

#### Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Inform the school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school
- Maintain regular communication with school staff when necessary

#### Children

Children are expected to:

- Arrive in school, regularly, and punctually.

### Start to the day

The morning whistle is blown at 8.50 a.m. Children then enter school, ready to start lessons promptly. Registers remain open for 15 minutes after they have been taken. Any pupil arriving after closure of registers will be marked as absent for the session. If no reasonable explanation is given for the lateness by the parent/carer, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Registers are marked in accordance with DFE guidance. Registers are marked consistently by staff.

### Lateness

Any pupil arriving after 9.00 a.m. should report to the school office.

If a child is persistently late, the class teacher will inform the Headteacher, who will contact the parents, so that they can work together to bring about an improvement in punctuality.

### Absences

Notification must be provided for all absences from school. Absences which may be authorised include:

- Sickness
- Medical/dental appointments
- Approved educational sporting activity
- Religious observance
- Family bereavement

- Participation in an approved public performance
- Interview at another educational establishment e.g. Secondary School.

However, it is expected that, wherever possible, any medical and dental appointments are made outside school hours. It is not usually possible to authorise absences for extra-curricular activities such as music or sports tuition. Absences are authorised by the Head Teacher.

### **Approved Educational Activity**

When pupils are engaged in off-site educational activities, they are counted as present, even though they are physically absent. Pupils are recorded as such if he/she is on:

- A field trip or educational visit
- A sporting activity
- A residential school trip

### **Leaving and returning to school during the school day**

When pupils leave or return during the school day, office staff must be notified.

### **Term Time Holidays or other occasions**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school or the alternative provision on a regular basis. The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to “fail to secure their child’s regular attendance at the school” The amendments to the 2006 Regulations remove any reference to family holidays, extended leave and the statutory threshold of ten school days. They make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence (holiday) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The amendments give parents no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time.

Absence for time out of school for any reason will only be authorised in wholly exceptional or compassionate circumstances. Requests should be made using the form available from the School Office and the school website, to the Headteacher, explaining why the individual circumstances meet these criteria. Should requests be made which do not fulfil these criteria, any resulting absences will be unauthorised and appear as such on the pupil’s record. A Fixed Term Penalty notice may be issued.

Changes coming into force from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, introduce the new national limit of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days) within a rolling school week period when a penalty notice has to be considered. Penalty notices are issued by the Local Authority.

### **Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)**

We work in partnership with the **AIO** to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school. The headteacher meets the **AIO** regularly, on an agreed schedule. A range of strategies may be offered to parents and carers to support persistence absence and/or lateness. This may include the involvement of the School Nurse or other medical professionals.

When attendance does not improve sufficiently, and after discussion with the **AIO**, a formal referral may be made to Children, Schools, and Families.

### **Rewards**

In our school, we reward good attendance with certificates, and outstanding attendance with medals. Children attending school 100% for a term receive a wristband and those attending school 100% for the year, receive a medal. Where a medical condition may prevent a child from achieving 100% attendance, account is taken of this, and awards to recognise good attendance are given based on individual circumstances.

### **Penalty notices**

Parents have a legal duty to make sure that their child aged 5-16, if registered at a school, attends that school regularly. Taking an unauthorised term time holiday can be grounds for issuing a penalty notice: either the school or the local authority may issue a penalty notice.

The amount of the penalty is:

- £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice
- £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice
- If the fine is not paid, this will result in the Attendance Improvement Officer taking the family to court for non attendance.
- If a parent receives a second fine for the same child within 3 years, the fine increases to £160 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days. After this, a parenting order or prosecution is considered. Prosecution can result in a £2,500 fine.

### **Evaluation of the policy**

This policy is reviewed regularly, and evaluated against the aims stated in the policy.

Further information: [School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-and-absence/overview)