



# COBHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Caring, Proud, Successful!**

## Attendance Policy Cobham Primary School

All children are entitled to receive an effective full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude. It is the joint responsibility of the school and parents/carers to ensure that our children receive that education.

Cobham Primary School expects all children to attend school every day that the school is open, in full school uniform, arriving on time, registering for the morning and afternoon sessions and remaining for the full school day.

Only the school has the right to authorise absence. The school will not do this if they believe that a child's attainment is being significantly impaired by his/her level of attendance.

As part of the school attendance policy, referrals will be made to our Attendance Advisory Service the South Eastern Attendance Advisory Service (SEAAS) where there are concerns about a child's attendance which has not been resolved by the school and/or when the school believes that the child's attainment is significantly impaired by his/her level of attendance.

### Punctuality

Punctuality is very important. Arriving late for school is a poor start to the day, causing embarrassment to your child, disruption to the class, unnecessary difficulties for teachers who are teaching, and most importantly, disturbance to learning for other children. At Cobham Primary School, the school day starts officially at 9 am. However to ease congestion in and around the school site, we welcome children from 8.45am. Children who arrive after 9am are considered to be late.

Most primary age children are brought to school by parents or carers. Therefore, poor punctuality is the sole responsibility of the parents or carers. If children are not brought to school on time they come to believe that education is not considered to be important, which often leads to truanting when they are older.

### Illness and medical appointments

#### Sickness

If your child is unwell, they should not attend school. **We ask that you notify the school by 9.30am on the first day of absence** if your child is unwell, please provide a letter or email of explanation when your child returns to school. If the school has not been contacted SEAAS will ring home to find out the reason for absence.

The school is very concerned for the welfare of all children. Where there are persistent or prolonged periods of sickness, the school may refer the matter to SEAAS so that the correct advice and assistance can be put in place to support the family through this difficult period.

There may be occasions where medical evidence is needed to support the reasons for your child's absence from school. The school and SEAAS will not approach your doctor to obtain that evidence. It is your responsibility as a parent/carer to provide a medical certificate or doctor's letter, as appropriate.

For contagious illnesses such as chicken pox, where children may have a longer period of absence, parents may request work from the school when their child is well enough to complete it.

Medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours wherever possible. If this is impossible then absence will only be authorised when the appointment card is shown. The child should be returned to school immediately after the appointment, unless advised otherwise by medical professionals.

### **Authorised Absence**

A child shall be considered for authorised absence from school...

- At any time when he was prevented from attending by reason of sickness, as described above, or any unavoidable cause. An unavoidable cause is an incident of a serious nature in the immediate family of the child concerned. Where something of this nature has occurred, we ask that the family contact the school at the earliest opportunity, so that the school can provide support, the length of absence from school can be agreed and that the child can be correctly registered.
- On any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs. The school recognises all religious beliefs and actively seeks to support families on these occasions. Where a family wishes to exercise this entitlement, the school asks that the family contact the school in writing at the earliest opportunity, requesting a religious observance day, so that the length of absence from school can be agreed and that the pupil can be correctly registered.
- If a parent/carer wishes to take a child out of school during term time, they should seek permission, in writing, from the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity. **Each case will be treated on its merits, but it is not the policy of this school to authorise such absences, except in the most exceptional circumstances.**

### **Leave during Term time**

Please note that the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#), which came into effect on 1st September 2013, removes references to family holiday and extended leave. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. .

If a parent/carer wishes to request such leave, they should make a written application at the earliest opportunity. The Head Teacher will consider each request and inform the parent/carer as soon as possible, in writing, whether the request has been granted or not.

Please be aware that if a request for such leave is not granted, any absence from school during the above dates will be recorded as unauthorised.

1. This is a segment of the directive issued by Kent County Council following the Supreme Court's recent ruling in April 2017 regarding Fixed **Penalty Notices** for Term Time Holiday. They have removed the reference to previous attendance level of 90% and above. *They now state that "we expect pupils to attend school every day when the school is open and where there are more than 10 sessions or 5 days unauthorised absence in a 50 day period, the school may request a **Penalty Notice**."*

Standard information provided with each Penalty Notice states that £60 is payable within 21 days of the Notice being issued, rising to £120 if paid between the 21st day and 28<sup>th</sup> day. If neither of these sums is paid within these periods, liability to prosecution will arise.

### **Levels of attendance.**

The school and the Attendance Advisory Officer (AAO) monitor the attendance and punctuality of each child on a regular basis. Parents will be notified by the school when attendance is less than 96% or a regular pattern of absence is noted and you will be invited to discuss any concerns or problems that you have.

If there is still no improvement and we believe that the child's attainment may be impaired by his/her level of attendance, a formal referral will be made to SEAAS. Parents will then be asked to attend a meeting with the Attendance Advisory Officer in order to address the attendance concerns for your child.

### **Rewards**

We place a high importance on regular and punctual school attendance and we do our best to promote and reward good attendance for all the children. Our attendance trophy is presented each week to the class that has the highest attendance and at the end of each term children are awarded a certificate for 100%. In the summer term, children with 100% attendance will receive a £5 book voucher.

### **In conclusion**

School attendance and attainment are closely linked.

It is extremely important that all of our children attend school on a regular basis, so that they receive the education to which they're entitled. This ensures that our children have the best opportunities in later life.

If a child misses one day at school per week over their school life, that is 80% attendance and is the equivalent to missing two full school years by the time they reach the end of secondary education. That is a lot of missed learning !!

Please don't leave it until it is too late. If you are having problems with your child's school attendance, make an appointment to speak to us so that we can provide advice and strategies to assist.

**Your co-operation is important.**

**We all want the best education for our children.**