



Colindale Primary School

Attendance Policy

Unicef article 29: Every child has the right to an education.

Policy last ratified and adopted	November 2021
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Statement of intent

Colindale Primary School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Colindale Primary School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:
“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”
- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Education Act 1996
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
 - Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
 - Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- 1.2. This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DfE (2016) 'School attendance'
 - DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- 1.3. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Complaints Procedures Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Child Protection Policy
 - Equality Policy

Together with the school's Rainbow values and UNICEF Rights of the Child.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The governing board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of Colindale Primary School.
- 2.2. The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 2.3. The governing board has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- 2.4. The headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.

- 2.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Attendance Policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 2.6. All staff, including teachers, admin and support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 2.7. Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- 2.8. Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

3. Definitions

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

- “Absence” as:
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Not attending school for any reason.
- An “authorised absence” as:
 - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave. Evidence may be required.
 - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave. Evidence will be required.
 - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
 - An absence due to a family emergency. Evidence will be required. This may be in the form of flight details, medical records, death certificates or any other evidence relating to the particular circumstances.
 - Any absences where a request for special leave has been made and not authorised and the child is still absent from school.
- An “unauthorised absence” as:
 - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
 - Absences which have never been properly explained.
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
 - Day trips and holidays in term-time.
- “Persistent absenteeism” as:
 - Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.

5. Pupil expectations

- 5.1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day and keep their attendance at, or above, 96 percent throughout the year.

6. Absence procedures

- 6.1. Parents are required to contact the school before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence. This should be done via the Weduc messaging app or by telephone.
- 6.2. A text message is sent to the parent of any child who has not reported their child as absent, followed by a telephone call if no response is received.
- 6.3. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer and a home visit may be carried out.
- 6.4. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, the attendance officer will investigate the circumstances. This may lead to a formal meeting with the parents and the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

7. Contact information

- 7.1. Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 7.2. Parents are responsible for updating the school if their details change.

8. Attendance officer

- 8.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement.
- 8.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents in consultation with the Headteacher and attendance officer.

9. Lateness

- 9.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. The school day starts at 8:30am for morning nursery children and 12:15pm for afternoon nursery children.

- 9.3. For all other year groups pupils should be ready to enter their classroom by 8:50am. Gates open at 8:40am.
- 9.4. Registers are marked by 9:00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 9.5. The register closes at 9:15am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time. Parents can receive a Fixed Penalty Notice for 6 or more arrivals after 9:15am in a 4 week period.
- 9.6. After lunch, registers are marked by 12:15pm in the nursery; 12:45pm in Reception; 1:15pm in years 1 and 2; 1:00pm in years 3 and 4; and 1:30pm in years 5 and 6.
- 9.7. The register close at 1:30pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.
- 9.8. Pupils attending after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but this will count as a late mark.

10. Term-time leave

- 10.1. At Colindale Primary School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 10.2. The headteacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- 10.3. The headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave. This will often involve a meeting with the headteacher and attendance officer.
- 10.4. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher and agreed only in exceptional circumstances.
- 10.5. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 10.6. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
 - Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
 - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason
- 10.7. If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

11. Leave during lunch times

- 11.1. Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.
- 11.2. Parents are required to submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher.
- 11.3. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent in to the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises.
- 11.4. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.
- 11.5. Pupils will leave the school premises within 5 minutes of the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.
- 11.6. Parents will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register at the school office.
- 11.7. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff has given their permission.
- 11.8. The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where a pupil displays poor conduct of behaviour when off the premises, or where there are attendance concerns.
- 11.9. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents are not entitled to appeal the decision.
- 11.10. Parents are able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.
- 11.11. Permission will be updated on a termly basis – letters will be sent to parents at the beginning of each term to confirm whether they would like their request to continue.

12. Religious observances

- 12.1. Parents are required to inform the school in advance, by completing the appropriate form, if absences are required for days of religious observance.

- 12.2. One day per year for religious observance will be authorised by the headteacher. If the religious days are recognised by the LA further days may be authorised.

13. Appointments

- 13.1. As far as possible, parents will attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 13.2. Where this is not possible, evidence of the appointment will be required. This can be in the form of a letter, text message or email.
- 13.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent.
- 13.4. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

14. Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities

- 14.1. Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).
- 14.2. Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance is required to request a licence from the pupil's home LA.
- 14.3. The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away.
- 14.4. The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:
- The pupil's education, health and wellbeing will not suffer; and
 - The conditions of the licence will be observed.
- 14.5. The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance/activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil's wellbeing, and that the pupil's education will not suffer.
- 14.6. The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.
- 14.7. The organiser of the performance/activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out.

- 14.8. The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence.
- 14.9. The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:
- For not less than six hours a week; and
 - During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
 - On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
 - For not more than five hours on any such day.
- 14.10. Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity, and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six-month period.
- 14.11. Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school.
- 14.12. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day.
- 14.13. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent.
- 14.14. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.
- 14.15. The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application.
- 14.16. The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this can include maximum hours and breaks.
- 14.17. The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only.
- 14.18. Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the licence applies is less than 60 days.
- 14.19. A licence is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad.

14.20. The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:

- Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place;
- Where performances or activities are taking place; or
- Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met.

14.21. The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licences at any time.

14.22. If the LA refuses to grant a licence, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual/organisation applying for the licence.

14.23. The organiser of the performance/activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given.

15. Monitoring and review

15.1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

15.2. Colindale Primary School's attendance target is 96 percent.

15.3. This policy is reviewed every three years by the headteacher; the next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2024.

15.4. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.

16. Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Colindale Primary School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, that good attendance is rewarded and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

- 16.1 The headteacher and attendance officer meet weekly to discuss attendance issues and monitor the progress of the school, groups and individuals.
- 16.2 Certificates and trophies – Super Gold, Bronze, Silver and Gold - are rewarded weekly in *Well Done* assembly for the classes with the best attendance.
- 16.3 All pupils who achieve 100% attendance over a half term are rewarded with a certificate and sticker.
- 16.4 All pupils who achieve 100% attendance across a year are rewarded with a certificate, sticker and book token.
- 16.5 Attendance is monitored by classroom teachers and any attendance/punctuality trends noticed are passed immediately to the phase leaders and attendance officer.
- 16.6 Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are followed up by the attendance officer daily.
- 16.7 Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- 16.8 If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard.
- 16.9 The pupil's attendance is monitored for two weeks and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and set targets for their child.
- 16.10 If targets are not met, the education welfare protocol is followed. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will draw up a parental contract. A four-week monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents by the EWO. This leads to a court assessment and the possibility of a fixed-term penalty notice.

17. End of day procedures

17.1 Colindale School closes at 3:15 every day.

17.2 All children from Nursery to Year 5 must be collected by a responsible adult over the age of 16. Children in Year 6 can be Independent Travellers once parents have completed the Independent Traveller Form and map showing the child's route to and from school and it has been approved by the Deputy Headteacher.

17.3 If you know you are going to be late to collect your child contact the school immediately. Steps can then be taken to ensure your child is cared for until you arrive. Upon arrival you will be asked to explain why you were late collecting your child.

17.4 If you are frequently late to collect your child, charging for the child care services received will be considered.

17.5 If your child is not collected at the end of the day, and you have not contacted the school to advise us, the office will endeavour to contact you at home and at work. If this is unsuccessful, a senior member of staff will be informed of the situation. To comply with legal regulations, a decision may then be taken to contact either Social Services or the Police.

17.6 If you are sending someone else to collect your child they must be an adult over 16 years of age and you must notify the school office in advance.

17.7 Please remember that children worry about their parents' welfare and can become quite distressed when they realise that no one has come to collect them. If you need support in arranging after-school care please refer to the school website or ask at the office about the Rainbow After School club.