

Capel-le-Ferne Primary School		
Attendance Policy		
Date agreed by Governors	18/01/2023	
Date of next review	Autumn 2023	
Further information about policy	This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures. The policy is written using latest KCC template.	
"Learning today for life tomorrow" Our Values: Independence, Creativity, Confidence, Respect		
Attendance Lead: Anthony Richards (HT)		
Attendance Officer: Sharon Atkins		

Statement of Intent

Capel-le-Ferne Primary School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The Governors, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Capel-le-Ferne Primary School.

Aims

Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the opportunities available to them. We actively seek to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Promoting positive behaviour and anti-bullying
- Delivering a differentiated and relevant curriculum
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupils' diversity, successes and achievements
- Celebrating good attendance
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts pupils at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to:

- Ensure their child arrives on time at school every day, keeping absences to a minimum.
- Contact the school on the first day their child is absent leaving a message with the child's name, class and the nature of the absence (e.g. illness).
- If the child is absent for more than 4 days, the school must be called on the fifth day of absence.
- Provide notification of the dates missed when child returns to school.
- If the child has been absent for longer than 4 days provide proof of a doctor's appointment – sight of the appointment card or the medication.
- Provide up to date contact numbers and any changes of address.
- Provide medical evidence indicating attendance at the doctor, optician, hospital where this is requested and where appointments can't be made outside of school hours.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.45am. All pupils that arrive after this time, must report to the school office.

School Responsibility

At Capel-le-Ferne Primary School, improving school attendance is a whole school commitment with specific staff taking on specific responsibilities. The following staff have the following responsibilities:

Overall Responsibility for Attendance/ Attendance Champion: Anthony Richards (HT)

- Policy development and overall oversight of compliance.
- Reporting attendance figures and trends to governors.
- Work with appointed governor for attendance.

Attendance Officer: Sharon Atkins

- Attendance and Lateness Records are up to date.
- If no reason provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call.
- Where there is no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- Appropriate attendance codes are used in SIMS.
- Parents are informed of attendance every long term.

Attendance targets

The school's attendance is monitored by the Local Authority and where appropriate they will discuss whole school and individual pupil targets. The whole school target for attendance is 98%.

Requests for leave of absence

At Capel-le-ferne Primary School, we believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, e.g. a special event. We expect parents and carers to contact the school at least a week in advance, and these will be considered on an individual case basis (see section below).

Parents and carers do not have an automatic right to withdraw their children from school for holidays in term time. The school may however grant leave for a minimal period in very exceptional circumstances. The school will only authorise this absence if the attendance is over 95% and is not in either the months of September or May.

Parents are asked to keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum.

Legitimate absence requests leading to an authorised absence

Legitimate reasons for absences that will lead to an authorised absence where these are communicated at least 1 week in advance include:

- Medical appointment or recovery from an operation.
- Attendance at a funeral of a family member.
- Observance of a religious holiday.
- Visiting another school or taking part in planned examinations.
- Opportunities for paid work in specialist fields such as acting in a show.

In order to authorise the absence, the school will request evidence of the reason for the absence.

The following reasons for absence are examples of what will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell.
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill.
- Oversleeping.
- Inadequate clothing/uniform.
- Confusion over school dates.
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons.
- Child's/family birthday.
- Shopping trip.
- Family holiday (with some rare exceptions).

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

Percentages	Further Information
95% to 100%	Attendance Officer monitors attendance patterns and discusses any concerns with Attendance lead.
90% to 95% (Improvement Needed)	Attendance Officer investigates. School intervention where required including phone calls, letters and meetings with parents.
50% to 90% (Persistent Absence)	Persistent Absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of a school. Where the level of absence has not improved and there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service using the Digital Front Door. If it is not clear a referral to the Service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice. For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make an Early Help Notification. Action plans might be employed.
0% to 50% (Long-Term Absence)	Long-term absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Support will involve all that is listed above.

Long-term absence

The school aims to support parents who have difficulties meeting these responsibilities and children with long term absence for medical needs. Action plans may need to be put in place for these children. We will work closely with other agencies to support families with irregular attendance and to action plan for the re-admittance and engagement of non-attending pupils such as the Behaviour and Attendance service, Educational Welfare Officers (EWO), Social Services and Children's Safeguarding Services. However in extreme cases parents may be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

Repeated absences

The school will work closely with parents to minimise the impact of any health or family circumstances that impact on a child's ability to attend school. In the case of persistent absences (attendance below 90%) due to ongoing medical issues, the school will work closely with parents and health to keep these to a minimum by drawing up a healthcare plan. In order to do this school may request up to date medical information and/or details of any diagnosis.

Repeated unauthorised absences

The school will need to contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to meet with the school leadership team and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will discuss and refer the matter to the School Liaison Officer who visits the school regularly.

The LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below:

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

Rewards for good attendance

There is a special recognition and reward for children with 100 per cent attendance for each long term (3 long terms in total- autumn, spring and summer). Children who achieve this receive a certificate. All children who achieve 100% attendance in either the autumn long term, the spring long term or the summer long term, are entered into a prize draw to win an attendance prize.

The class with the highest attendance receive an additional 15 minutes outside. This additional 15 minutes is organised by the class teacher. This is announced in assembly every Friday.

Registering

The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions under the 1995 Education Act. A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

School starts at **8.45am**. Outside gates are opened at **8.35am** and staffed until **8.50am** when they are closed. Any children arriving after 8.45am must come through the front entrance where their time of arrival is recorded by the school office staff. They will be marked as late by the office staff and the reason for their lateness will be recorded electronically.

The class teacher takes the SIMS register at **8.45 am** and this is sent to the school office. All children must be marked present ('/' am, '\ pm) or marked 'N' for absence.

The register officially closes at 9:30am and any pupil arriving after this will be marked absent for the session. A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision made by the school to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence.

The register for the afternoon session is taken by **1.10pm**.

The school operates First Day Calling when pupils are absence from school without reasons being known. Parents will be contacted by the office staff, on the numbers provided. In the absence of a response the school will work its way through available numbers in order of priority to ensure the safety of children. These calls do not have to be followed up in writing. The school may then decide if it wishes to authorise the absence or record it as an unauthorised absence. This decision will be made within the guidance set out in the 1996

Education act, which identifies the following reasons as acceptable reasons for an authorised absence:

- The child is ill or is prevented from attending by unavoidable cause
- The child lives over a certain distance from the school and either the LEA has failed to make suitable arrangements to register the child at a nearer school or the LEA has failed to make suitable transport arrangements
- The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith
- The child is absent 'with leave'. This refers to leave being granted by the school, only in exceptional circumstances.

A set of standard codes are used consistently within the register. These codes are input into the electronic register as required and are used to give depth of meaning to the register and provide statistical meaning to the absences.

Penalty Notices

Capel-le-Ferne Primary School may make use of Penalty Notices to address poor school attendance in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

A penalty notice can be issued as a result of the following:

- Parentally condoned absence
- Unauthorised leave for the purpose of a family holiday in term-time
- Delayed return from leave of absence without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed)
- Where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours during the first five days of exclusion.

A Penalty Notice may be issued when a pupil has been absent for 10 or more half day sessions (5 school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions or period of 50 school days – these absences do not need to be consecutive.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28-day period may result in prosecution by the local authority.

Capel-le-Ferne Primary School asks that parents fully support this policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education.

Appendix 1 Late letter (Code L)

Appendix 2 Late letter (Code U)

Appendix 3 Absence Letter

Appendix 4 School Attendance Meeting Letter

Appendix 5 School Letter Warning re: Penalty Notice Referral

Appendix 6 Unauthorised absence confirmation of PN request

Appendix 7a Response to Leave Request (Not Authorising)

Appendix 7b Response to Leave Request submitted retrospectively (Not Authorising)

Appendix 8 Unauthorised leave confirmation of PN request

Appendix 9 School letter where they believe a holiday was taken

Appendix 10 Traveller Attendance letter

Appendix 11 Traveller Absence due to travelling

Appendix 12 School Referral Pathway

Appendix 1

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has been arriving late at school. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was late (Code L):

«dates_of_lates_before»

Total lates before registration closed: «total_lates_before» half day sessions

At our school the register is taken at **8:45am** and at **1pm**.

A pupil's lateness will seriously disrupt their learning and can be embarrassing for your child.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve punctuality. If we can help in any way, perhaps via the School Nursing Team or our Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 2

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has arrived after the register has been closed. Below for your information is a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was late (Code U):

«dates_of_lates_after»

Total lates after registration closed: «total_lates_after» half day sessions

At our school the register is taken at ?? am and is closed at ?? am for the morning session and taken again at ?? pm and closed at ?? pm for the afternoon session. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked 'U' which records the absence as unauthorised for that session.

Arriving after the register has closed is seriously disrupting your child's learning and is impacting on their overall attendance.

Persistent late arrival may lead to a referral for a Penalty Notice or a referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

If «forename» continues to arrive late after the register has closed we will contact you to arrange a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 3

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

I am writing to express my concern over the number of occasions that «forename» has been absent from school. I attach for your information a summary of attendance indicating the days «forename» was absent.

A pupil's absence can seriously disrupt their learning, not only do they miss out on teaching while they are away but they are less prepared for future lessons when they return.

I am sure you share my concern and would wish to work with the school to improve «forename»'s attendance. If we can help in any way, perhaps via the School Nursing Team or our Family Liaison Officer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 4

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «forename» «surname»

Despite a previous letter in the past 100 days, I note with concern that your child's attendance at school has made no significant improvement. «forename»'s attendance at school is currently «percentage_attendance»% which means «he_she» has missed «total_authorized_absences» half day sessions for authorised absence and «total_unauthorised_absences» half day sessions for unauthorised absence. This will have an impact on your child's education which we cannot ignore.

As there has been no improvement in «forename»'s attendance, I am inviting you to attend a School Attendance Meeting with the school Family Liaison Officer. I would be grateful if you could contact the school office so that a time can be arranged.

If you do not attend this meeting and «forename»'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

The School

Appendix 5

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

At our school we consider attendance of utmost importance and I am therefore bringing this information to your attention.

Our monitoring process has shown that «forename» has been absent from school for a total of «total_unauthorised_absences» unauthorised half day sessions. I refer you to legislation regarding Penalty Notices.

'As from 2005, Kent Local Authority (LA) introduced Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from school of at least 10 sessions (5 days) during any 100 possible school sessions.' A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

On receipt of the Notice, the penalty will be £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the LA.

Please note this is a warning letter that a Penalty Notice could be requested if a total of 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) are reached.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

If further unauthorised absence occurs you will be contacted and invited in for a meeting at the school.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 6

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

With reference to our letter dated ??, «forename» has now reached a total of «total_unauthorised_absences» half day sessions of unauthorised absence. As a result we will now be requesting a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 7a

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Request for leave during Term-Time

For the attention of the parents of «forename» «surname»

I have received your request to take «forename» out of school for a family holiday between ??date and ??date, a total of ??Number of school sessions.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

I have considered your request but I am writing to confirm that on this occasion the leave will not be authorised. If you decide to take «forename» out of school I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 7b

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Request for leave during Term-Time

For the attention of the parents of «forename» «surname»

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:

- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

As stated above, I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively and I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Penalty Notices are issued for each child to the parent/parents whom are responsible for the absence and the amount of the penalty will be £120 to be paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution by the Attendance Service.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 8

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Name: «forename» «surname» DOB: «date_of_birth»

With reference to our letter dated ??date, the leave of absence taken between ??date and ??date has now been recorded as Unauthorised Absence and as a result a Penalty Notice has been requested.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 9

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Re «forename» «surname»

You failed to apply in advance for permission for «forename» to be absent from school.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence, except in exceptional circumstances. ***(State why you are treating this absence as a family holiday and/or why there are no exceptional circumstances)***

Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

I am unable to authorise leave retrospectively therefore this absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence, where a child has 10 unauthorised sessions within 100 school session a Penalty Notice may be issued.

The Penalty Notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty instead of being prosecuted for failing to secure your child's regular attendance at school. The amount of the penalty is £120 per parent, per child, but if payment is made by you within 21 days of receipt of this Notice it will be £60 per parent, per child. If you pay this penalty within the time limits, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence, i.e. your liability for the offence will be discharged.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 10

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Traveller Absence

«forename» «surname»

I am writing to say how concerned I am over the number of times «forename» has been absent from school. This academic year «forename» has missed «total_authorized_absences» authorised half day sessions and «total_unauthorised_absences» unauthorised half day sessions achieving an overall attendance rate of «percentage_attendance»%.

Traveller children have to attend school for 380 sessions (190 days) each year, which is the same for all children and you are at risk of being referred to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer if «forename»'s attendance falls below 90%. I am unable to authorise any absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances or if you will be travelling for occupational purposes and agree this with the school in advance.

If you would like to speak to me about «forename»'s attendance, please telephone the school to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 11

«addressee»

«address_block»

«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»

Traveller Absence

«forename» «surname»

Thank you for contacting me to say that «forename» will be absent from school from ??Date as you will be travelling due to your work.

The law allows me to authorise «forename»'s absence if your trade or business means that you have to travel from place to place. However, you have not let me know when «forename» is likely to return to school. Unless you contact me during the next 10 school days to confirm a date, I will refer «forename» to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education.

After 20 days absence, there may be grounds to take «forename»'s name off the school roll and you will have to re-apply for a school place when you return.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 12

Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

