



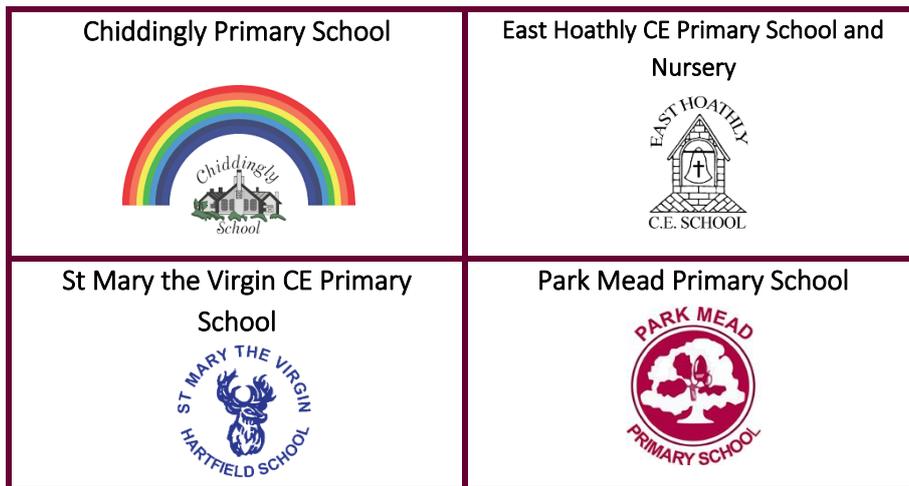
Attendance Policy

Review cycle	1 / 2 / 3 years	Date: September 2021
Approved by	Full Governing Body / Executive Headteacher	
Changes made in this review cycle	September 2021 Visions for each school added Park Mead added	
Linked policies	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Prevent Policy	
Signed		Date: September 2021
Position	Executive Headteacher	
Date of next Review	September 2024	

This policy reflects the vision and aims of The Pioneer Federation by:

- ✦ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ✦ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Click on each School's badge to see the Vision and Values of individual schools



Principles

- ✦ Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.
- ✦ Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.
- ✦ 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.
- ✦ Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

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

- ✦ *parents keeping children off school unnecessarily*
- ✦ *truancy before or during the school day*
- ✦ *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. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service from the Local Authority. The Practitioner 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 Legal Interventions on parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- ✿ Registration window is from 8:50 until 9:00am, with registers closing at 9:30am
- ✿ Any child arriving during the registration window is on time.
- ✿ Any child arriving between the end of the registration window and the registers closing will be marked as late.
- ✿ Any child arriving after the closure of the registers will be marked as absent. The authorisation of such absences will follow the regular criteria.
- ✿ Afternoon registration is at 1:15pm.
- ✿ Early pick up of children is not authorised, unless for certain medical appointments (not all, please see below for criteria)
- ✿ Late pick up of children after school will be monitored and if necessary referred through safeguarding procedures.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- ✿ Sickness absence should be reported to the school office absence line before 9.30am on the first day of absence and follow up calls made to keep the school informed if the absence is longer than one day.
- ✿ Planned absence during term time that is not medical should be requested in writing using the school form and parent should be issued with the "Request for leave of absence in term time" leaflet issued by ESCC.
- ✿ GP and dental appointments should be made out of school hours unless it is an emergency in which case the child may well not attend school that day for that reason.
- ✿ Hospital appointments which are arranged should be arranged for out of school hours or for the afternoons where possible.
- ✿ Hospital appointments which are given (e.g. for certain clinics which only run at given times) parents should request an appointment that will enable their child to be in school for as much of the day as possible. All children should be in school for the first part of the morning wherever possible.

It is not usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips, family birthdays etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

The Pioneer Federation has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

An acceptable rate of attendance is 96%, with a target of 97.5%.

This will be monitored in the following ways:

Before starting our school:

- ✿ Parents are made aware at prospective parents' events, open days and home visits that the school take attendance seriously and about our expectations.
- ✿ Parents will also be made aware that by sending their child to school before they are 5, they are obliged to follow the policies of the school which includes not taking children on holiday in term time.

Absence & lateness from R-Y6:

- ✿ Administrative staff at each site will phone all families of absent children daily at 9.30am if there has been no information received as to where the child is.
- ✿ Admin staff will publish the weekly attendance for each class in the weekly newsletter using a colour coded "traffic light" system: 100% - gold; 96.5- 99.9% green; 95-96.4% - amber; <94.9% - red.

Reports will be given to Head of School by admin staff fortnightly for each class and will show:

- ✿ Attendance % for that class
- ✿ Children with less than 90% attendance and their individual %
- ✿ Punctuality % for that class
- ✿ Children with less than 90% punctuality and their individual %
- ✿ Patterns or concerns within those individual children's reports

Senior Leaders will employ the ESBAS flow chart for any children with an EHCP (see Appendix 1). In addition, attendance and punctuality rates will be reported to governors at every Full Governing Body meeting, and the "Disproportionality relating to Persistent Absence in school" will be scrutinised to identify any vulnerable groups. Parents of children who are displaying persistent absences which are not for valid reasons (see above) and are not showing signs of improvement will be asked to attend the Governor's Attendance Board where they will explain the reasons for absence to members of the Governing Body.

In cases where there are concerns over absence, parents will be contacted by one of the following:

- ✿ Class Teacher
- ✿ Inclusion Manager
- ✿ Head of School or Executive Headteacher
- ✿ Involvement of ESBAS (East Sussex Behaviour and Attendance Service at the Local Authority)

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Governing Body

- ✿ Ensuring that regular attendance figures are made to the LA and DfE
- ✿ Requesting information from the Senior Leaders/Exec Head on any aspect of the school, including attendance
- ✿ Producing an annual report to parents in which they make reference to the schools attendance figures
- ✿ Identify and attend relevant training regarding attendance matters
- ✿ Sit on the Governor's Attendance Board to discuss issues with individual families.

Senior Leadership Team

- ✿ Positively promoting good attendance within the school
- ✿ Overseeing the implementation of attendance policy and procedure
- ✿ Ensuring the collection of accurate statistical data
- ✿ Developing efficient monitoring and evaluation systems
- ✿ Forming positive links with ESBAS
- ✿ Reporting to Governing Body
- ✿ Meet with parents of children causing concern.

SENCOs

- ✿ Meet with parents, alongside the class teacher, of any children whose attendance is showing concern.

Class Teachers

- ✿ Accurate recording of the daily electronic registration list
- ✿ Communicating concerns to the SENCO, Senior Leadership Team or DSL as appropriate
- ✿ Promoting good attendance and punctuality within the class
- ✿ Maintaining positive links with parents whilst communicating concerns
- ✿ Ensuring all notes and messages received are sent to the Admin team
- ✿ Share attendance data with parents at every Parent Consultation evening.

Administrative staff

- ✿ Maintaining electronic registration system

- ✦ Receiving and recording telephone communication from parents.
- ✦ Assisting in the collection of data
- ✦ On and Off rolling procedures
- ✦ Dealing with casual admissions
- ✦ Maintaining pupil and staff attendance information using SMS.

All of the above should be present in the job descriptions for these posts respectively (and in the case of governors, in their handbook).

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 a level of attendance as possible.

Appendix 1: ESBAS Flowchart for managing attendance of pupils with EHCPs

Attendance Management and EHE Guidance for Special Schools

