



CLARE COMMUNITY
— PRIMARY SCHOOL —

Attendance Policy

Academy Name	Clare Community Primary School
Attendance Target	To be at or above national rates
Academy opens at	8.45
Registers close at	8.50 classed as late registers close at 9
Gates close at	8.50

Role	Name and role	Contact Details
Headteacher	Lorna Stranger	lstranger@clareprimary.org
Attendance Officer	Jane Chamberlain	jchamberlain@clareprimary.org
Governor with responsibility for Attendance	Stella Byrne	Contact via admin@clareprimary.org
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lorna Stranger	lstranger@clareprimary.org
Reporting an absence	Admin office	admin@clareprimary.org 01787 277423
Local Authority Attendance Officer	Peter Korobik	Peter.Korabik@suffolk.gov.uk

1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to encourage pupils to attend school every day (190 days per year) in order to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is essential in order for pupils to maximise their chances of success. There is clear evidence showing strong links between excellent attainment and excellent school attendance.

Clare Community Primary aims to ensure that:

- High expectations are set for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- We build strong relationships with families to make sure they have the support in place to attend school
- Early action is taken to address patterns of attendance
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to attendance and understand the correlation with safeguarding
- Parents, carers, and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year are recognised and rewarded

The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the school community including pupils, parents, staff, governors and trustees. It is fully incorporated into the whole school ethos and culture.

Attendance at Clare Community Primary School

Clare Community Primary School is committed to meeting our obligations with regard to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department of Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve Academy attendance](#) 2024, through our whole-school culture and ethos.

Clare Community Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to reach their full potential. Attendance in school has a widely evidenced and far-reaching impact on attainment, however the significance goes beyond academic achievement.

Being present in school is crucial, not just for educational results but also for fostering vital social skills and a sense of belonging in children and adolescents. Regular attendance cultivates the friendships and social interactions that are fundamental to school life and development into emotionally resilient adults.

There is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, school work, and friendship groups.

Clare Community Primary School aims to work in partnership with parents and families, listening to and understanding any barriers to attendance and will work with them and other agencies to ensure that every child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

We are committed to a whole school and community approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents and carers. Our aim is to ensure that all pupils experience a deep sense of belonging to their school community.

This policy is part of a suite of safeguarding and pastoral policies and should not be viewed in isolation. Policies include but are not limited to:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting Medical Needs Policy

The School Day

- The school day for pupils begins at 8.45am — by this time all pupils should be on the school's premises and lining up on the top playground with their class.
- Pupils will then be registered in their classrooms by a member of staff.
- The school gate will be manned by a member of staff for a further 5 minutes.
- Children arriving at school after 8:50am should enter through the front office and will be marked as late (L) in the register.
- Children arriving after 9am when registration closes will be marked as unauthorised late (U).
- Lateness is monitored on a fortnightly basis by the Attendance officer and the Headteacher.
- Afternoon registration takes place in pupils' classrooms by a member of staff;
- The school day ends at 3.15

3. Attendance Procedures

- Parents are asked to contact school before 9.00am to notify the Attendance Officer of a child's absence.

- Authorised absence, e.g. illness or medical appointments, must be supported by a phone call, email or letter from parents explaining the reason for the absence **as well as** written confirmation of the appointment from the appropriate body.
- Parents who wish to collect their child from the premises during the school day will be expected to email the school in advance and bring a letter explaining the reason for absence.
- Where parents fail to make contact providing a reason for absence, the School Attendance Officer will endeavour to contact them. If contact is not made by 12pm SLT will be alerted and will ensure safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

4. Responsibilities (In line with the Home-School Agreement)

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently;
- Attendance targets are set for individual pupils and the whole school.
- Attendance and punctuality data is reviewed fortnightly.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and be registered punctually;

Parents or Carers will:

- Ensure good attendance (97% and above);
- Inform the school on **each day of absence** and give a specific reason for the absence;
- Discuss any planned absences with the school in advance and seek the appropriate leave of absence in good time, being aware that this will only be coded as an authorised absence in exceptional circumstances.

5. Monitoring Attendance

Class Teacher/Cover Staff

- Class teachers/Cover staff have the responsibility of registering pupils' attendance at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions;
- And will ensure that the registers are completed in accordance with the appropriate regulations;
- Absence notes from parents will be checked by class teachers or Reception for their authenticity and will be passed to the Attendance Officer for recording; absences which are telephoned or emailed will also be recorded.

Attendance Team

The Attendance Team comprises of the Attendance Officer and the Headteacher who will;

- liaise closely with class teachers in checking that registers are completed accurately;
- ensure that the registers are available for scrutiny and for emergencies e.g. fire drills; (in the absence of the attendance officer the office team will ensure registers are up to date and available for emergencies and fire drills)
- ensure that all absences are recorded accurately and in accordance with regulations;
- make contact with parents/carers on the day when a child is absent from school and where no reason has been received from the parents, in line with Safeguarding procedures;
- meet regularly to review the attendance of pupils and issue relevant letters to parents;
- meet with the Education Welfare Officer to monitor attendance and discuss individual concerns;
- Cooperate with local authorities for Children in Care providing information when they call daily.
- provide the Governing Body with a termly attendance update.

Notification to Parents/carers

The category of Persistent Absentee is applicable to any pupil whose attendance, for whatever reason, falls below 90%. When this happens the school is legally obliged to discuss the case with the Education Welfare Officer to agree a plan of action.

- The attendance team will meet regularly to monitor attendance and parents will receive notification by email (or letter if they are not online) when attendance drops below 93% without a valid health reason.
- If a pupils attendance falls below 90%, and to try and avoid the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer, parents will be contacted and may be invited to discuss ways to improve attendance at school.
- Should the pupil's attendance then drop below 85% we may insist that we request medical evidence* to support all future absences relating to illness. Failure to provide documentation will result in an unauthorised absence mark being recorded.
- A referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer for either a Prevention meeting or a Fast Track Referral if attendance does not improve. In this case, parents will be invited to a meeting by letter.

**An example of medical evidence could be an appointment card, copy of a prescription, a hospital discharge letter or a stamped surgery compliment slip (a doctors' letter is not required). A email notification or text message would also be acceptable.*

6. Temporary Changes to School Start and Finish Times

During certain exceptional periods of schooling, temporary changes to start and finish times may be put in place by the Headteacher. These will be clearly communicated to parents and carers in advance of arrangements beginning, and before there is a return to normal procedures.

During periods of online schooling, daily attendance will be measured by participation in timetabled activities such as online lessons and completion of set pieces of work which will be shared with class teachers.

Parents will be expected to inform the office if children are unable to attend online lessons in the normal manner and following the normal timescales.

Class teachers will keep track of participation and completion of set work. They will inform the office and Headteacher of any children where contact is not made on a daily basis. Parents and carers will then be contacted to establish why children have not been participating in the programme offered.

7. Punctuality

- All pupils are expected to be punctual for the start of school, at 8.45am, and to lessons.
- Pupils arriving after registration at 8.45am will be marked as late using an L code.
- Pupils arriving after registers close at 8.50am will be marked as an unauthorised absence. This will be coded as a U.

8. Legislation

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance, [Working together to improve school attendance 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/123456/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_2024.pdf)

The Education Act 1996 states that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who are absent for more than ten days without explanation
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law

[Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) - Part 6

[Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) - Part 3

Working together to improve school attendance (2024) also refers to:

- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

9. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

10 Leave of Absence

For extended periods of absence due to medical procedures a copy of the appointment letter should be provided.

Authorised absences

Are for reasons such as illness, medical appointments, or other unavoidable circumstances. In these instances, academies can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent with permission. Examples are:

- Attending an interview for entry into an educational establishment
- Study leave for public exams
- Religious Observance - only day(s) exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong to.
- A temporary, time limited part-time timetable for exceptional circumstances
- Exceptional circumstances: the school will consider each request individually, taking into account individual facts and circumstances. The school may consult with Anglian Learning or the Local Authority to determine exceptional circumstances.

Parents who wish to make a request for a leave of absence may do so by writing directly to the headteacher detailing the reasons for and length of the absence.

11 Unauthorised absence and Term time holidays

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider exceptional. These include but are not limited to:

- Tiredness / late night
- Minor illness and injury that does not impact on ability to learn or be in school
- Pupils who arrive late after the close of the register.
- Birthday celebrations
- Day trips
- Term time holidays

There is **no** entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday. The DfE does not consider a need for a holiday to be an exceptional circumstance.

Where a term time holiday is suspected or known about, and the national threshold is met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10 week period) the school will work with the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice. **(Error! Reference source not found.– Penalty Notices)**

12 Working with Pupils and Families

Pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment. Attending school is essential for pupils to allow them to get the most out of their educational experience.

Clare Community Primary School recognises that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school due to a medical need or a special educational need. We are committed to working collaboratively with pupils and parents to remove those barriers and to put support in place.

Ways in which we may do this are:

- Supportive phone calls and emails home
- Class teacher check in with pupil
- Help to catch up on missed work and identify barriers to learning
- Pastoral support to identify and mitigate barriers / anxieties surrounding school
- SEND assessments and referrals where appropriate
- Reasonable adjustments to school provision and routines
- Letters home advising of support available
- Informal and supportive meetings with the class teacher and or Attendance Champion
- Offers of an Early Help Assessment or support from other agencies or services
- Consideration of alternative types of education in some circumstances where professionals indicate that medical or SEND needs cannot be met in school

13 Monitoring and review

The Governing Body will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy annually. Any changes will be made in line with legislation.

Ratified by Governing Body	CCPS LGB
Date	01 March 2024 Updated 07 October 2024