



Clifford Holroyde Specialist SEN College

CLIFFORD HOLROYDE SPECIALIST SEN COLLEGE

Attendance Policy

Introduction:

This policy aims to improve the attendance of pupils at Clifford Holroyde to ensure their continuity of education and to contribute to the safety of pupils, by gaining knowledge of their whereabouts, during the school day. This is a successful and happy school and your child plays their part in making it so. However for our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time every day that the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility- parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our newsletter.
- Report to you at least termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rates are and how this relates to their attainments.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, VIVO's, certificates and outings / events.
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

Understanding Types Of Absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, 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 reasons such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. It is this type of absence which can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings and includes:

- Parents/Carers 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 late mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your 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 usually makes things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil is a persistent absentee when they miss 20% or more of their schooling across the year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing great harm and we need parents' fullest support to address this.

We will give priority to any pupil either at the PA level **or at danger of reaching it** and parents will be informed of this immediately so that together we can put a plan in place to get that child back into school. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Pupil Attendance and Education Welfare Officer.

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence;
- Or, you can speak with any member of staff that you see in school and tell them why your child is or has been off school.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Write to you after three days absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Headteacher, Pastoral Care Manager and / or Governors if absence persists;
- Refer the matter to the Pupil Attendance & Education Welfare Officer.

Telephone Numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

The Pupil Attendance And Education Welfare Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Pupil Attendance and Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. For our school this is Mrs Anne Marsh. She will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve your child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the PAEWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority on 0151 225 4980.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss earning points as part of the Behaviour Management System in school. They also do not spend time with their form tutor getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons and can be embarrassing for the child. Lateness can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **08.40 am** and we expect your child to be in at that time.

Registers are marked at **08.50 am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

Exceptions will be made if your child travels to and from school via taxi and the school are aware that the taxi is running late for whatever reason that may be. At **09.30am** the registers will be closed – in accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be present on site, **but this will not count as a present mark** in law and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This means that you may face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Registers are checked each morning at 09.00hrs by the Admin Officer and Pastoral Care Manager. (Refer to attendance procedures appendix 1.) In the afternoon your child must be in for **1.05pm**. The registers will be closed again at **1.15pm** and again arrival after this time will be treated as an unauthorised absence.

Engagement Programme

Those pupils at Clifford Holroyde who are on the Engagement Programme should all be at their respective training providers unless the school has been notified. Registers close by **10.00hrs**. After this time Clifford Holroyde is notified via emails to the main school office where attendance is checked by the Admin Officer and Pastoral Care Manager. (Refer to attendance procedures appendix 2).

Managing persistent late record:

For pupils on Clifford Holroyde site and at training providers, if your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher / Safeguarding Officer or Governors to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school / training providers on time.

Holidays in term time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not to take children away in school time.

Remember any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the school a maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Please be aware however that in line with Local Authority and Government guidance, leave of absence in term time will only be considered in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Full details of our policy and procedures are available from the school, but it is important that you understand the circumstances when leave in term time will **never** be agreed by us:

- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is a very important time as your child needs to settle into a new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- When a pupil's attendance rate is already below (90%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and you should take time to study them. Each pupil has an individual attendance target that has been set based on previous terms attendance. They are rewarded if they meet /exceed this target.

The **minimum level** for the school is **85%** and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares to this level.

Our target is to achieve **better than 85%**. We are aiming for this level because although it is below the government's recommendations we feel it is a realistic and achievable target for an SEBD school. This target will be reviewed on a termly basis and raised accordingly.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our Newsletter / Website and we ask for your full support.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in school are:

Ms E Dwyer: Headteacher

Mrs K Garrett: Pastoral Care Manager

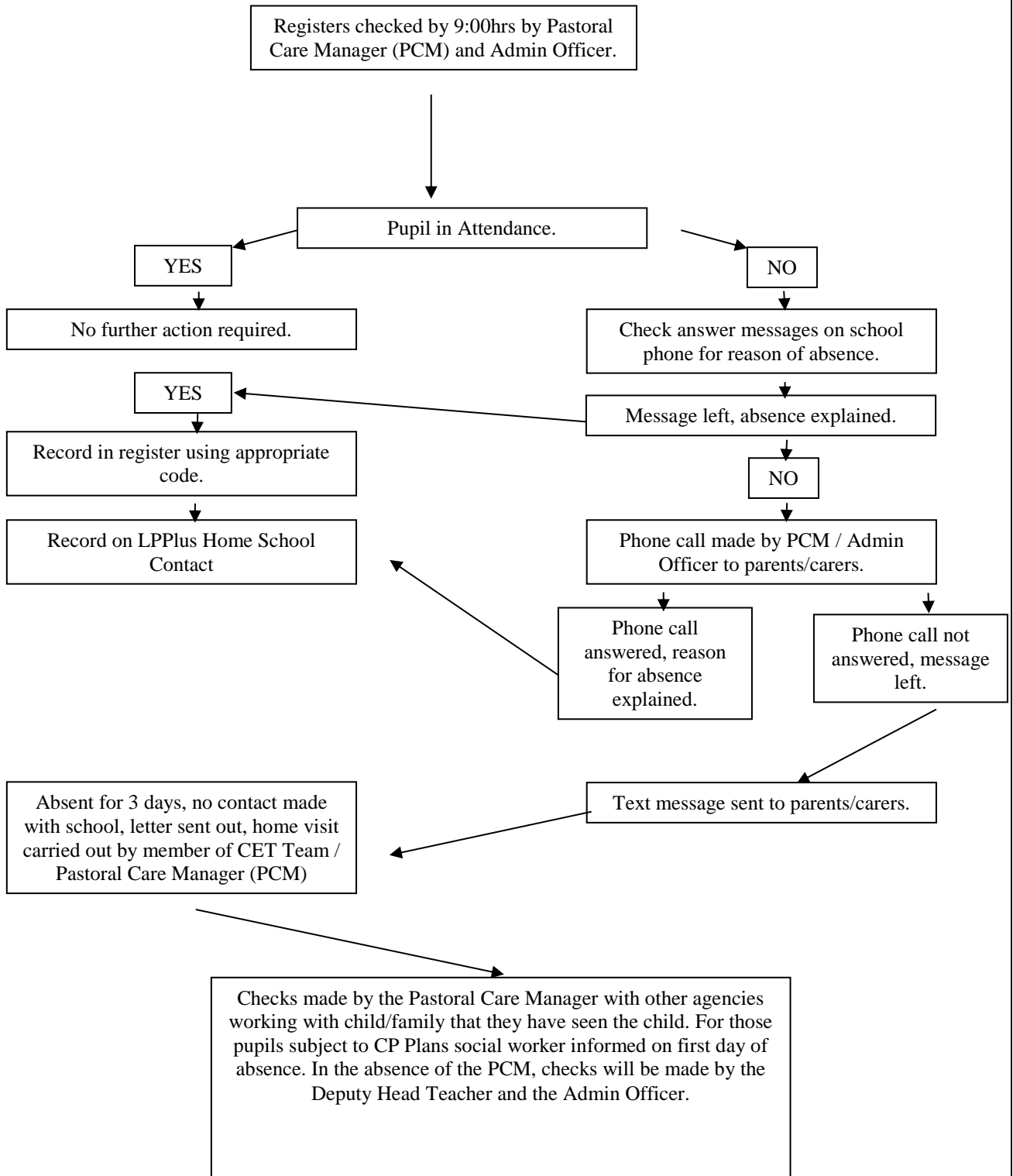
Mr C Pover: Engagement Programme Manager

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.

This Policy is reviewed Annually and was last reviewed by the Governing Body in November 2014.

CLIFFORD HOLROYDE ATTENDANCE **PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL BASED PUPILS**



CLIFFORD HOLROYDE ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE FOR ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME PUPILS

