
Regular and punctual attendance is essential if pupils are to receive the full benefit of everything that school has to offer. CPS is committed to promoting good attendance for all children, and to working in partnership with parents to achieve this aim.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly. **Schools** have responsibilities for promoting good attendance, for daily registration, and for reporting rates of absence.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

If a child is absent from school for a legitimate reason, then the absence will be **authorised**.

Types of absence which are more likely to be authorised include:

- illness; unavoidable medical or dental treatments
- religious observance
- external exams or assessments
- School visits

Under the 2013 school attendance regulations, leave of absence from school shall not be granted unless

- a) an application has been made in advance, and
- b) the Head Teacher considers that the leave of absence should be granted due to the 'exceptional circumstances' of the application.

The 2013 Regulations have changed the way in which requests for family holiday are treated (see panel opposite for more information).

Absences are **unauthorised** if they are either unjustified or unexplained. Merely telling us that your child will be away does not mean the absence will be authorised — only the school can authorise absence.

What is 'good' attendance?

The school's overall attendance rate is around 96%, which is in line with the national average. For an individual pupil, 95% attendance is the equivalent of half a day per fortnight away from school, or ten days in the school year. Many of our children have attendance rates far above this, and some children achieve 100% attendance. However, a significant number of children have attendance rates below 90%, i.e. nearly twenty days of absence in the year. Unless children are unwell for extended periods, we would therefore expect most children to have attendance rates above 95%.

The Role of the Inclusion Service

The school has an attached Inclusion Officer (Formally known as Education Welfare Officer or EWO) who makes regular visits to check registers and monitor pupil attendance. If patterns of absence or lateness are detected, the Inclusion Officer will discuss the matter with the school, and may contact parents or make a home visit if necessary. Their role is to work with parents to improve attendance, and is also able to provide more general support and advice if needed.

Persistent absence and broken weeks

Attendance below 90% is classified as 'persistent absence', and is monitored closely by the school and the EWO. The EWO also monitors patterns of attendance, and may contact parents if children rarely complete a full week in school (i.e. they often have 'broken weeks').

Punctuality

The school day begins at 8.55am. *
It is important that children arrive punctually to ensure that they do not miss the beginning of the lesson, and to avoid disruption for the rest of the

class. If children arrive after the register has been completed they will be marked as late. Regular lateness will be followed up and discussed with parents. If children arrive after the official close of the register (9.30am) and no adequate explanation is given, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Due to Covid-19 and the need to socially distance Year Group Bubbles, CPS has put into place a staggered start and finish. For the first few weeks we will not record children as 'Late'. Although we recognise that families need to become familiar with new school timings, it is important for the reasons already outlined for children to be punctual. Also children may feel more concerned if they are late and have to wait until they can enter the school safely.



Summary of procedures

- If your child is unwell, please telephone the school as early as possible on each morning of the absence. Please let us know the nature of the illness and how long you expect your child to be away. A verbal message from another child or sibling is not acceptable, and absences will not be authorised on this basis. You do not need to ring every day if you have already told us that your child will be away for a specified number of days.
- If your child is away and, by 9.30am, we have not heard from you, a member of the office staff will contact you. This will be a text message (if you are registered with ParentMail) or a phone call.
- For other planned absences (e.g. if you are requesting leave for a holiday) please complete the **Application for Leave of Absence** form which is available from the office or the school website. We will return the bottom part of the slip to let you know if the absence has been authorised or not.
- If your child has been away and you have not let us know why, we will write to you requesting an explanation for the absence. We will then decide whether the absence should be authorised or not.
- If your child's attendance is significantly below average or is a cause for concern for any other reason, we will liaise with the Local Authority Inclusion Officer, who may contact you.



For more information on issues relating to attendance and absence, please refer to the school's full Attendance Policy, which is available from the school office and the school website.

If you have any questions regarding attendance, please see your child's teacher or a member of the office staff.

Information and advice on attendance issues is also available from:

Surrey Contact Centre:
01372 833588

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CLAYGATE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance and Absence

Information for Parents



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