



Claremont Primary School

A hub of educational excellence and innovation,
supporting and valuing everyone

Pupil Attendance Policy

Responsible person	Steph Kirk, Attendance Officer Candi Roberts, Headteacher
Responsible governor	Sandra Williams, Chair of Governors
Responsible governor team	FGB
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At Claremont we believe and recognise that the diversity of our community is one of our greatest strengths and assets. We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are treated fairly, and we have carefully considered and analysed the impact within this policy to promote equality of opportunity for all and we will use our position of influence as a school to work with all stakeholders to eliminate discriminatory barriers and ensure that our pupils have a sense of shared, common belonging and understanding

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Aims and Objectives

Statement of Intent

Claremont Primary 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 monitor attendance on a weekly, termly and annual basis.

The Governors, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Claremont Primary.

The Importance of School Attendance

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. At Claremont, we want to provide a school experience that is calm, orderly, safe and a supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn as a foundation of securing good attendance.

Some children find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, the school works with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

The Law

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, suitable, full-time education. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attends school every day it is open and arrives on time except when a statutory reason applies. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life choices. For the most vulnerable children, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Legal Framework

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance' Statutory Guidance August 2024
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010

- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- DfE Keeping children safe in education 2025
- Children missing education September 2025

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection & Online Safety Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Health Needs Policy
- School Suspensions and exclusion policy
- Complaints Procedure

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of parents and pupils

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
- Ensuring their child attends school every day on time and arrives in the classroom between 8.45am and 8.55am daily
- Contacting the school to report their child's absence before 9.15am on the first day of absence, giving a full reason, and then each subsequent day of absence advising when they are expected to return. **This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts known.**
- Ensuring their child is collected from school on time at 3.25pm daily
- Informing the office before midday, where possible, if there is a change to the normal home time arrangements
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance (see page 8 for further information)
- Ensuring that any medical appointments are made outside of the school day where possible, especially routine dentist and optician appointments
- Working with the school and local authority to help them understand any barriers to their child's attendance
- Proactively engaging with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support

Should a parent have any concerns about their child's attendance or any worries they have which may be affecting their attendance they are able to contact the Assistant Headteacher, Attendance Officer or Pastoral Team through the office – admin@claremont.kent.sch.uk / 01892 531395.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school every day on time ready to learn

The Role of the School Staff

At Claremont Primary School, there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The Headteacher, Candi Roberts, is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- Appointing an attendance officer role

The Assistant Headteacher, Hannah Voke, has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues and is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions
- Regularly meeting with the Attendance Officer and reviewing attendance data
- Holding meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the board of governing body

The Attendance Officer, Steph Kirk, has responsibility to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by text message and/or phone call
- Where there has been no communication from the parent, a code of unauthorised absence will be entered and an email will be sent to parents requesting reasons for absence
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see Appendix 1 for the National Attendance Codes)
- Regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels
- Make the necessary statutory data returns to the local authority

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Completing the register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024)
- Notifying the Attendance Officer in the first instance of children whose attendance is causing concern
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated

The Role of the Governing Body

The governing body has a responsibility to:

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school to prioritise and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it
- Ensure the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most by prioritising the staff and resources needed. This includes ensuring schools engage and work effectively with the local authority School Attendance Support Team and wider local partners and services
- Handle complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy

The Role of the Local Authority

The local authority is expected to:

- Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services
- Have a School Attendance Support Team (PIAS) that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance
- Organise regular Targeting Support Meetings with each school in their area so the school's attendance leads and their point of contact in the local authority's School Attendance Support Team can identify, discuss, and agree joint targeted actions for pupils who are persistently or severely absent and those at risk of becoming so. This should include agreeing what support the LA will provide and which (if any) other statutory or voluntary services should become involved.
- Use these meetings to build strong relationships and work collaboratively with the school's attendance leads, including providing advice on recording in the register, accessing services or the wider area-wide attendance approach.

Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or are not appropriate (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time), the local authority's school Attendance Support Team should liaise with school and the early help lead practitioner or social worker (where applicable) to take forward attendance legal intervention.

Attendance Expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils through newsletters, reports and letters.

Pupils are expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day. The school's attendance target for all pupils is **100%**.

Registers and Late Arrival at School

Children should be in their classroom at 8.55am for morning registration. The gates will be closed at 8.55am. Pupils arriving after 8.55am must enter the school by the main entrance and report to the office where they record their name and the reason for lateness using the electronic signing in system.

- Morning register **is taken at 8.55am** for the whole school. Pupils will receive a late mark (Code L – late before registration closes) if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The morning register will **close at 9.05am**. Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as late after registration (Code U) and this will count as an unauthorised absence.
- The afternoon register, for Early Years and KS1, is **taken at 1pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark (L Code) if they are not in their classroom at this time. The register **closes at 1.10pm** and pupils will be marked as late after registration (Code U) if they arrive after this time.
- The afternoon register, for KS2, is **taken at 1.30pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark (L Code) if they are not in their classroom at this time. The register **closes at 1.40pm** and pupils will be marked as late after registration (Code U) if they arrive after this time.

In the case of ongoing punctuality issues where children repeatedly arrive after the register has closed, the parents will be sent a letter notifying them of the need to improve punctuality. The school will offer support and guidance to assist in the improvement and a target improvement may be set. Where there is no improvement, a meeting will be requested with the parents and headteacher. The headteacher may consult with Kent's attendance officer and a referral for support from Kent attendance may be made. Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice (please see page 11).

Late Collecting from School

All pupils should be collected from school on time at 3.25pm daily. If there is a change to the normal home time arrangements then parents should inform the office by midday, where possible, so the message can be passed to the child's teacher.

Parents should let the office know if they are going to be late collecting their child with an expected arrival time. In the event a child has not been collected the office will call the parents and the child will wait with their teacher. Any children who are collected late from school must be signed out at the office where they will record their name and the reason for the late collection.

Late collections from school are monitored and discussions will take place with parents where applicable. (see appendix 6)

Reporting Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence **by 9.15am**. This can be done either by phone (01892 531395) or email at admin@claremont.kent.sch.uk. They will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence together with symptoms if due to illness – we cannot accept just 'unwell', 'under the weather' or 'poorly'. This is so the school can monitor any patterns and act where necessary following NHS Guidelines. Parents/carers should continue to update the school each subsequent day the child is absent.

We will mark the absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by 9.15am to report the absence, the office staff will contact the parent by text message on the first day that the child does not attend school. If the office does not receive a response, they will follow this up by telephone call.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct code to use to enter on the register

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness. The school will ask for medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

Requesting Leave

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified. If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

Absence (leave) during term time can only be approved in “**exceptional circumstances**”. The following reasons are examples of absence that **will not** be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific 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 Holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Exceptional Circumstances may include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- Where an employer stipulates that holiday has to be taken during a set period (letter from the employer is required as evidence)
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent’s or child’s rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a student’s previous record of attendance into account when the Headteacher is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional’ are **rare, significant, unavoidable and short**. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that the school can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

From September 2013, the Department for Education amended the Pupil Registration Regulations removing the Headteacher ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in “exceptional circumstances” but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher’s decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Term Time Absence Requests

To request term time absence, parents must complete an **'Application for leave of absence during term time' form at least 14 days before the start of the absence where possible.** (See Appendix 4 for example of form). On the form parents should provide a full reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. Parents should also provide any supporting evidence such as a wedding invite, letter from employer etc.

Email or telephone requests cannot be accepted.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (either G code – Unauthorised holiday or O code – unauthorised leave) and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice.

The regulations do not allow schools to grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Medical Appointments/Music Exams/School visits during the school day

In some instances, a short amount of time out of school is required (music exams, medical appointments, school visits). In these circumstances, a **'Pupil Pass' form must be completed at least 24 hours in advance and authorised by the school office.** (See appendix 5 for example of form).

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend any appointment and appointments of more than half a day will not be authorised without very good reasons. Routine medical or dental appointments should be booked outside of the school day or during the holidays.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that the parents of pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the Local Authority (LA) which authorises the school's absence(s).

Parents should complete an **'Application for leave of absence during term time'** to request the absence. Authorisation from the Headteacher will be subject to receiving a copy of the licence from the LA.

Please see [Child performance and activities: licensing legislation - GOV.UK](#) for more information.

Penalty Notices

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for unauthorised absence (including lateness) of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The national threshold for a penalty notice has been met when a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) within 10 school weeks, with one of, or a combination of the following codes:

- Code G (Unauthorised holiday)
- Code O (Unauthorised absence)
- Code U (pupil attended after the register had closed)

A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session and the period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years. The sessions do not have to be consecutive.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a suspension or permanent exclusion.

Penalty Notices for persistent absence and/or lateness

Where the school is considering a Penalty Notice, the parent will be contacted and an attempt will be made to resolve the issue which is causing the lateness or persistent absence. If a Penalty Notice is being considered the parent shall be written to and warned that the school may take action. This notice to improve letter will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the offences (a copy of the registration certificate will be included)
- The date range in which 10 or more unauthorised absences occurred
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period
- A clear timeframe for the 20 school day improvement period detailing to and from dates
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like

Penalty Notices for holiday

If a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions (5 school days), within 10 school weeks, with the code G (unauthorised holiday), the school is not required to issue a notice to improve letter and a penalty notice can be issued on the pupil's return.

Penalty Notice Amounts

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with **Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from 19th August 2024**.

Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Children Missing Education

Children Missing Education (CME) are children of **compulsory school age** who are **not registered pupils** at a school and are **not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school** (e.g elective home education).

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 them
- 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

In accordance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the school will notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register as soon as the pupil's name is to be deleted. This does not apply where the pupil's name is deleted after they have completed the school's final year (for example, pupils who leave primary school at the end of Year 6).

Part Time Timetables

Children have the right to a full time education and part time timetables should only be used in very exceptional circumstances and should be time limited. Part time timetables will not be used in response to negative behaviour and will be agreed in consultation with parents and educational specialists; they will only be used when they are of benefit to the child.

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

Prevention

For pupils with 95 - 100% attendance, the class teacher will investigate and notify the Attendance Officer of any concerns. The Attendance Officer will then contact parents if appropriate or arrange for someone to do so on their behalf.

Early Intervention

Typically, at 90 - 95% attendance, the school will:

- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where barriers are outside of the school's control, the school will work with all partners to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. As a minimum, this will include meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. These actions will be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.

Targeted support

Persistent Absence (PA)

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), we will:

- Work together with the local authority to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils.
- We will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches such as Penalty Notices.
- If the needs and barriers are individual to the pupil this may include specific support with attendance or consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.
- Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment.

Severe Absence (SA)

Particular focus will be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of agencies. These children will therefore be prioritised and all partners will work together to make this group the top priority for support. This may include:

- holding more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This will be led by the Headteacher and may include the school's point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. These meetings will clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future, but will also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with, the school will work with the local authority to:

- Put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order
- Issue a fixed penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).
- Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

See Appendices 2 and 3 for more information.

Analysing Attendance and Reporting to Parents

Attendance for all pupils, as well as vulnerable groups of pupils, are regularly analysed and reported to the school's Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body. The school also has regular meetings with the local authority's School Attendance Liaison Officer. Hannah Voke, Assistant Headteacher, takes the lead on this, in discussion with the school's Attendance Officer. The aims of analysing attendance are as follows:

1. To celebrate good attendance
2. To support students where medical diagnosis hinders attendance
3. To monitor attendance of all pupils and proactively engage with parents and pupils with support and challenge
4. To use attendance tracking information to identify safeguarding concerns eg FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), possible young carers, CME (Children Missing Education), PA (Persistent Absentees – below 90% attendance), SA (Severe Absentees – below 50% attendance).

Parents will be notified of their child's attendance figure three times a year on their school report.

When a child's attendance drops below 90% and/or there are concerns about the child's punctuality in the mornings, a letter will be sent home to the parents in the first instance. If attendance/punctuality continues to be a concern after the letter has been issued parents will be invited in to school to meet with the Assistant Headteacher, Hannah Voke.

Awarding Good Attendance

Children with 100% attendance at the end of the school year will receive a 'good attendance' award. We recognise that there are occasions where children will have had an authorised absence or exceptional circumstances which has prevented them from achieving 100% but their attendance is still very high. These children will also receive a 'good attendance' award.

Appendix 1

Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	Present – late for session
D	Dual registered at another school	
B	Attending approved educational activity (not sporting or work experience)	Approved educational activity
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved educational activity
P	Participating in a supervised sporting activity	Approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip organised by school	Approved educational activity

Absence Codes (authorised and unauthorised)

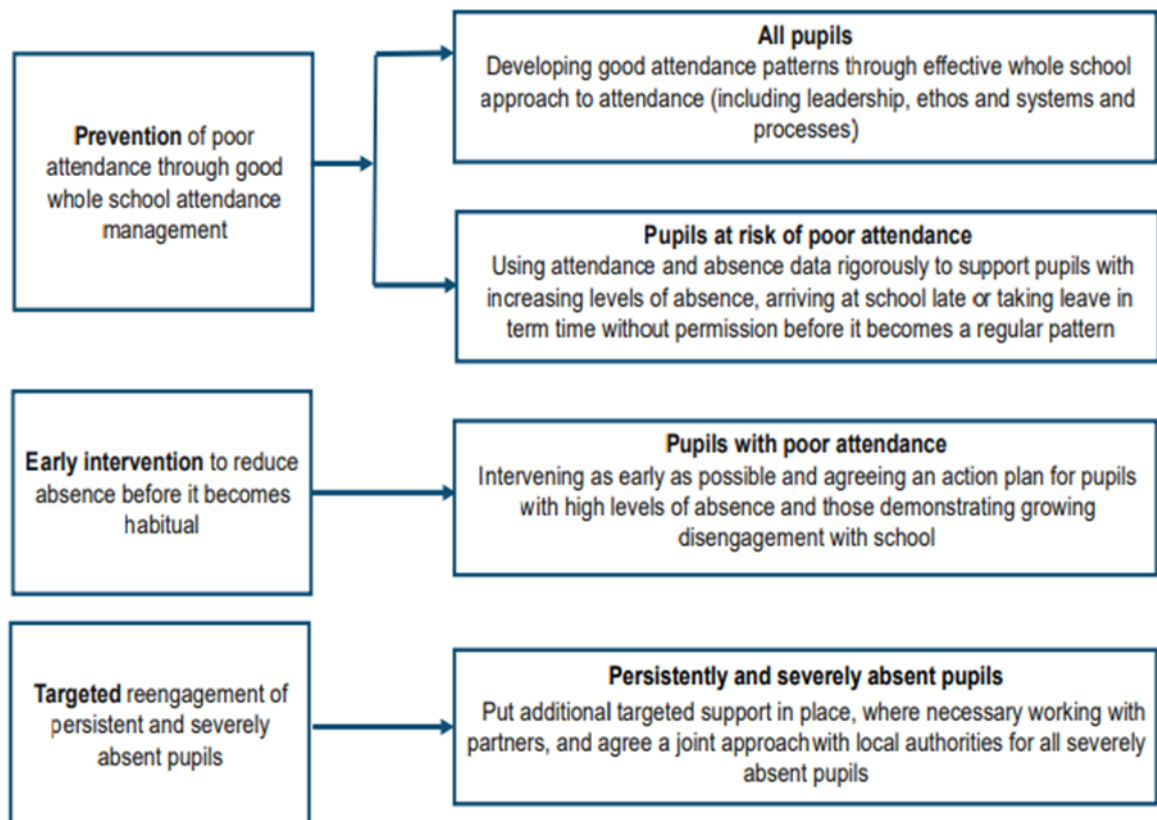
Code	Definition
<i>Authorised Absence</i>	
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances granted by the school
C1	Leave of absence to participate in a regulated performance
C2	Leave of absence for compulsory school aged pupil subject to a part time timetable
E	Excluded but no alternative made
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
M	Medical or dental appointments
R	Religious observance
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes where the pupil is a mobile child
<i>Unauthorised Absence</i>	
G	Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
O	Absent without authorisation
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole or partial school closure

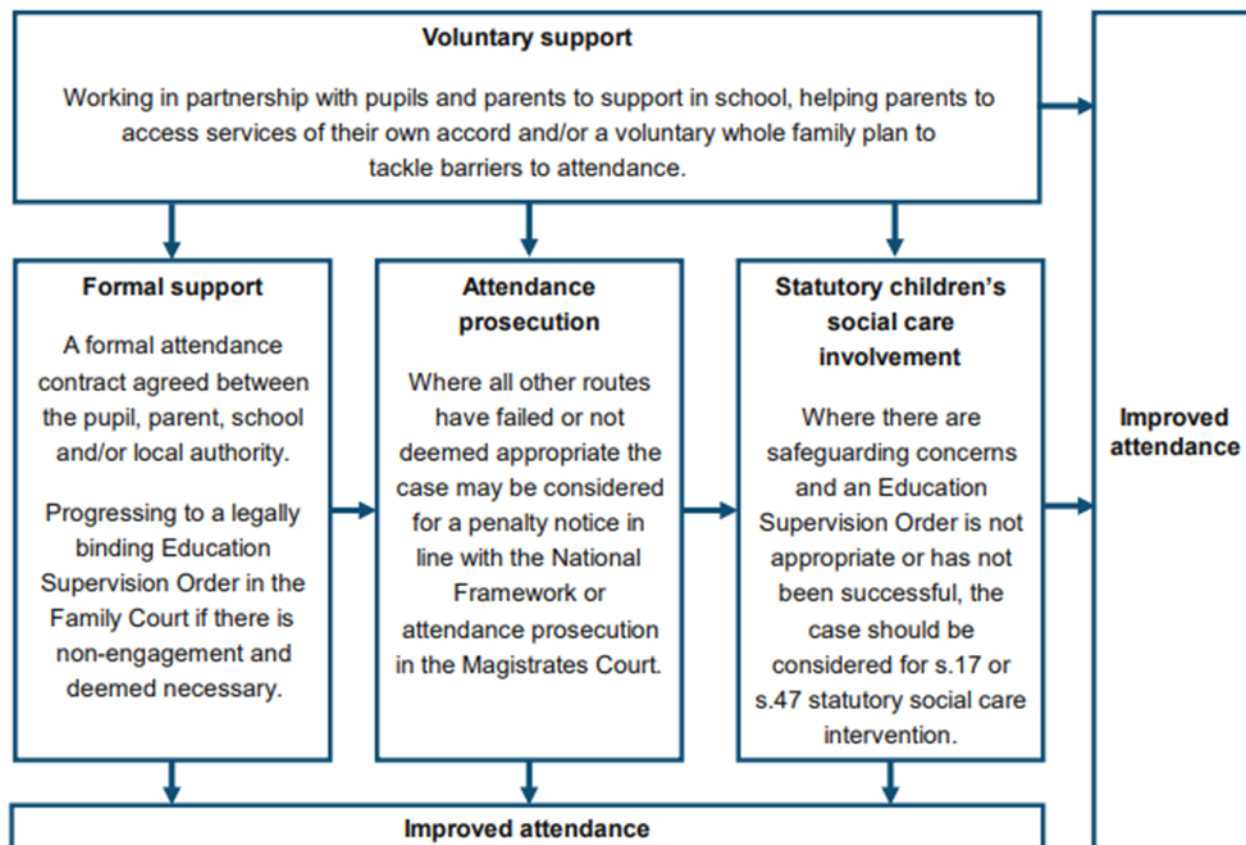
Appendix 2

Effective school attendance improvement and management



Appendix 3

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



Appendix 4



Claremont Primary School

Dear Parents/Carers

Request for Leave of Absence During Term Time

The Department for Education has amended the regulations and guidance in relation to absences in term-time. There is now no automatic right to take your child out of school during term time. From September 2013, the Department for Education amended the Pupil Registration Regulations removing the Headteacher ability to authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday.

Following this amendment, requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in 'exceptional circumstances'. An '*exceptional circumstance*' would have to be defined as an **unavoidable** cause e.g. a one-off emergency situation which prevents the child from attending school. Equally travel time requests to holiday destinations are also not considered exceptional circumstances. I urge families to support the school by ensuring that taking term-time holidays are not the culture of our community.

Requests for absence (leave) will be considered individually but can only be authorised where there are exceptional circumstances. There is no right of appeal as the authorisation of the absence is the sole responsibility of the Headteacher. The Headteacher cannot give retrospective approval so any request should be **made in advance by at least 2 weeks**.

Exceptional Circumstances may include:

- Family trauma, a serious illness/death of close relative/person to the family
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family
- Attending celebrations in line with culture and/or religion
- Where an employer stipulates that holiday has to be taken during a set period (letter from employer is required as evidence)

All requests for leave of absence must be made using the form on the reverse. Completed forms must be returned to the school office. **Please note that email requests for leave of absence will not be considered unless accompanied by this form.** A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If the absence requested is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, and you nonetheless take your child out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in line with Local Authority guidance.

In the case of an unauthorised absence the **Local Authority Attendance Service** monitor these. Should the incidence of unauthorised absences be judged of concern Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £80 which increases to £160 if not paid within the first 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the charge will be at a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. In both cases, if the Penalty Notice remains unpaid this may result in prosecution by the Kent PRU and Attendance Service.

Claremont has maintained an excellent attendance record for many years. Please be reassured that despite this legislation the school will continue to place the needs of the children first, seek to work with families to overcome barriers to learning and aim to provide the best environment for children and families to thrive and achieve. I have always believed that the vast majority of parents have the wisdom to judge when an absence is in their child's best interests. Claremont however, must be seen to act in line with regulations.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Candi Roberts
Headteacher

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

This form should be completed for ALL requests for leave during term time. Please complete this form with as much detail as possible and return to the school at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Pupil Name Class.....

First day of absence Date of return to school.....

Total number of school days missed

Full reason for absence (including any exceptional circumstances). Please attach any supporting evidence e.g. wedding invite)

.....
.....
.....

I have read the letter overleaf and understand that if the request is unauthorised the Local Authority Attendance Service monitor absence taken and may decide to issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £80 which increases to £160 if not paid within the first 21 days. I understand that if a second penalty notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period, then the charge will be at a flat rate of £160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay, this will result in legal action.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

Signed Dated

(Please ensure you are giving at least 14 days' notice of the proposed absence)

For office use:

Attendance to date % Absence previously authorised days

Absence previously unauthorised days

AUTHORISED: Your request has been authorised for the following dates: ---/---/---to ---/---/---
and will be registered as authorised on your child's record

UNAUTHORISED: Your request has been unauthorised for the following dates: ---/---/--- to ---/---/---
and will be registered as unauthorised on your child's record

Signed by Headteacher..... Date ---/---/---

Appendix 5



Claremont Primary School

REQUEST FOR PUPIL PASS

If your child needs to be absent for a short period of time for any reason during the school day a Pupil Pass must be obtained **at least 24 hours in advance**. These are **required for short medical/dental appointments, music exams etc.**

Please complete the form below and return it to the School Office as soon as possible:

Pupil Name Class

Date of absence: Leave time:..... Return time:.....

Please explain reason for absence (if absence is for more than half a day please provide supporting evidence such as a hospital appointment letter etc):-

.....
.....
.....

Signed:..... Name:..... Date:.....

NB: Pupil Passes will be given directly to the pupil to pass on to parents.

.....

Claremont Primary School Authorised Pupil Pass

Pupil Name: **Date:**

Reason:.....

Leave time:.....**Return time:**.....

Pass actioned: Signed..... **Dated:**.....

Appendix 6: Late Collection

Dear Parents and Carers,

Unfortunately, there has been a developing culture for late collection over the past year and so, we have had to consider the impact of this on the children themselves and the staff. I understand only too well the challenges that working parents face and am keen to do what we can to support parents and carers. That said, we must also have clear procedures in place and I am writing to you to inform you of these procedures in relation to the late collection of children.

Wrap around care is available through Newton Lang for after school care and we have after school clubs which must be pre-booked in advance.

If you are going to be late, please let the office know at the earliest convenience.

Frequently the teachers have meetings, marking and next day preparation to carry out after school and so the 'child-care' is falling to the office team who have an office role.

If family members are continuously late due to non-emergency reasons, they will receive the following letter:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please may we remind you that the school day finishes at 3:25pm. Under no circumstances should a child be left at the school any later than this time, unless there is an emergency or a valid reason as to why you will be late collecting your child from school which we are aware of and have agreed.

Collection of others prior to our school collection time, personal appointments or challenges parking are not considered appropriate reasons for the late collection of your child.

Being collected late can be distressing for the child, and the office team do not have capacity to repeatedly chase late collectors.

If there is an unavoidable reason as to why you are going to be late, you will need to contact the school office. It is important that you let us know in plenty of time so that we can get a message to your child and their class teacher. This must be a rare occasion and not the norm for your routine.

If your child is left at school past 3:25pm with no explanation, we will try to contact you. If your child is left uncollected and attempts to contact you have been unsuccessful, then the school will have no other option than to contact the police and/or children's social care services because we will consider this a safeguarding issue.

If you are persistently late collecting your child from school at 3:25pm, we will organise a Targeted support meeting with the Local Authority Attendance officer.

Thank you for cooperation with this urgent matter.

*Yours Sincerely
Mrs Candi Roberts
Headteacher*