ATTENDANCE POLICY

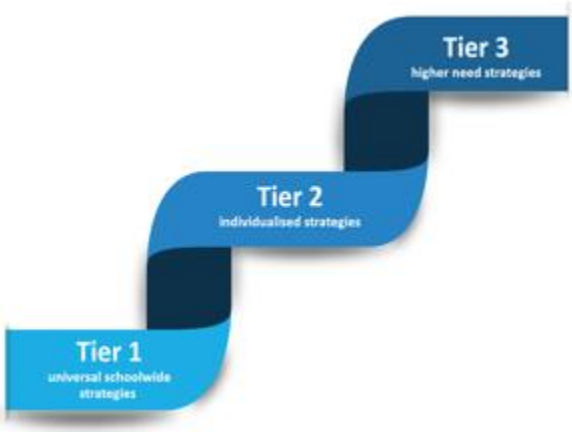
Chisenhale Primary School

Confidence • Curiosity • Kindness

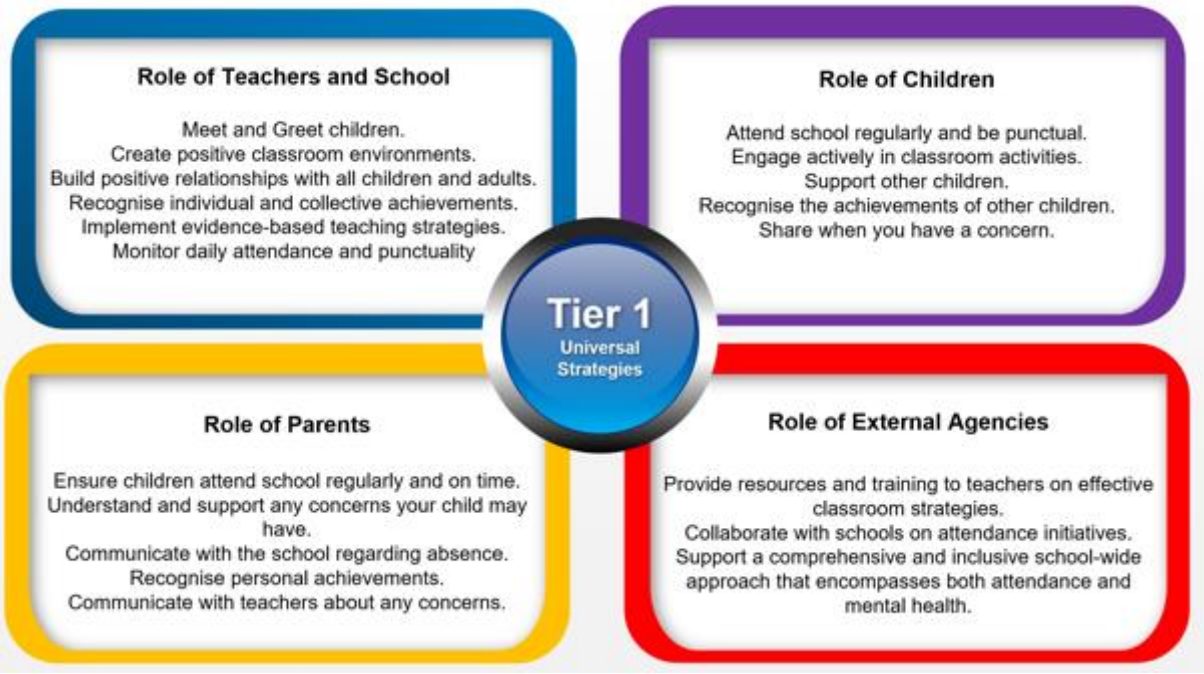
Date reviewed	February 2024
Reviewed by	Gemma Anidi
Approved by Governors	March 2024
Planned Review date	March 2025

Introduction
Chisenhale Primary School is proudly recognised as an Inclusive Attendance school. Our unwavering commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance.

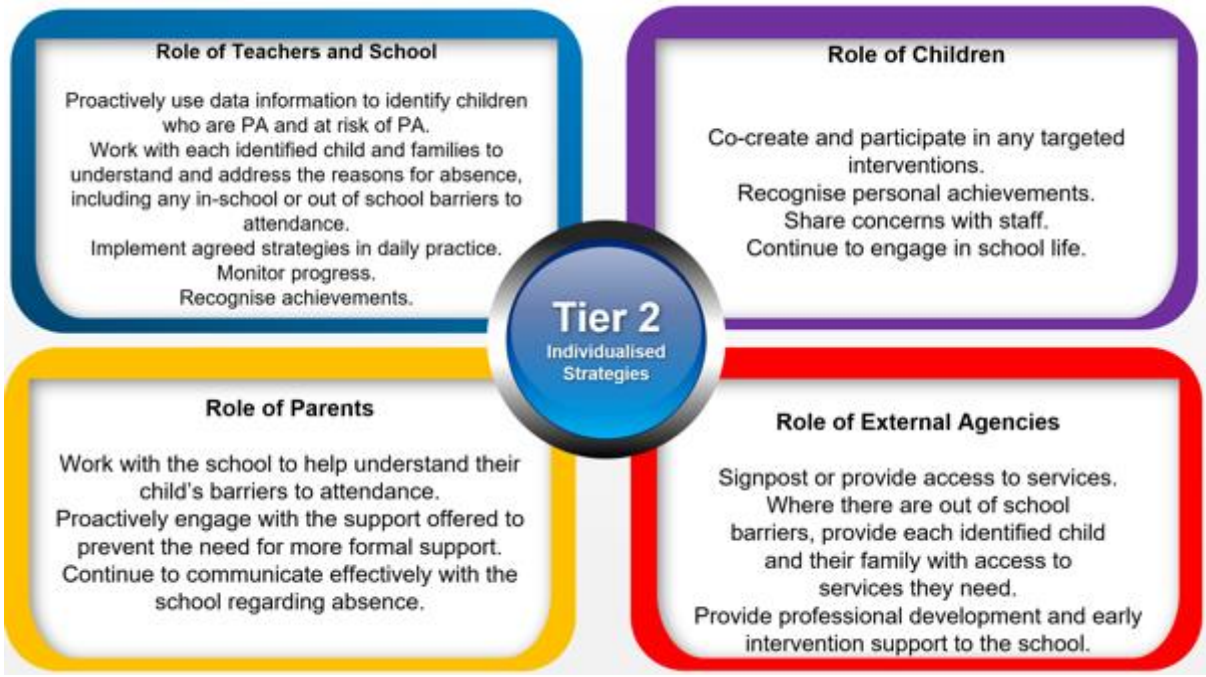
Multi-Tiered System of Support
To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, we implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, parents, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of the system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DFE) "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" guidelines.



Tier 1 - Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.

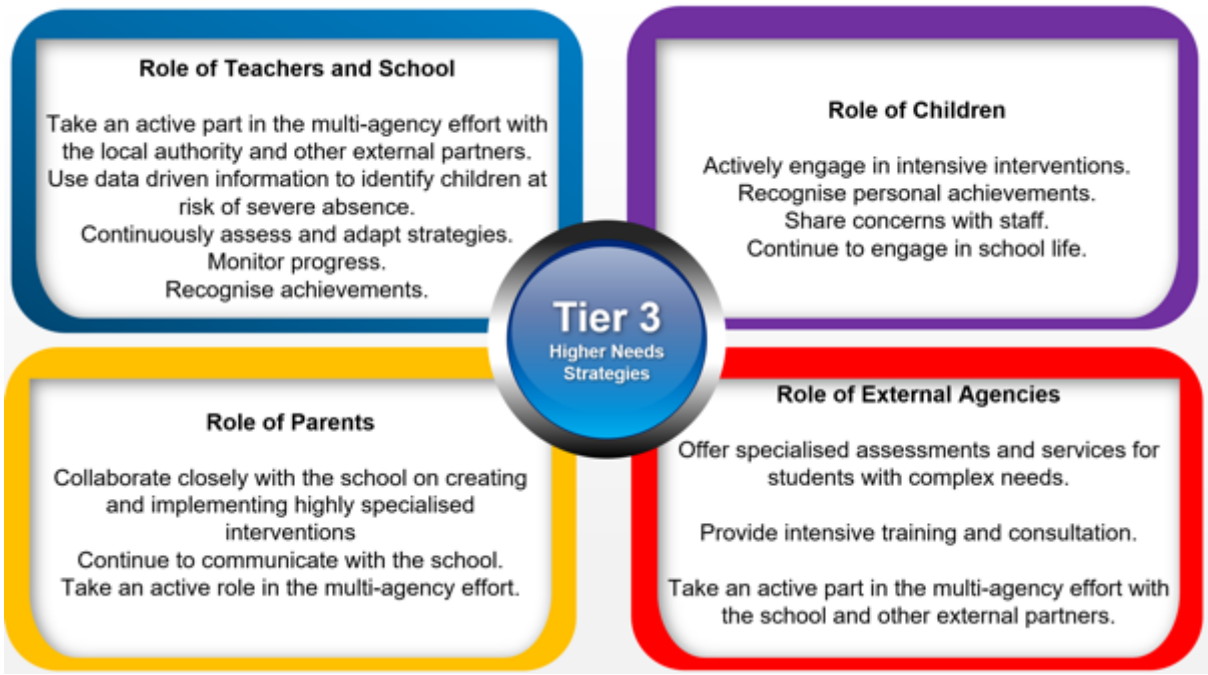


Tier 2 - Individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.



*PA = persistent absence, this is attendance below 90%

Tier 3 - Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.


Role of Teachers and School
Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other external partners.
Use data driven information to identify children at risk of severe absence.
Continuously assess and adapt strategies.
Monitor progress.
Recognise achievements.
Role of Children
Actively engage in intensive interventions.
Recognise personal achievements.
Share concerns with staff.
Continue to engage in school life.
Tier 3
Higher Needs Strategies
Role of Parents
Collaborate closely with the school on creating and implementing highly specialised interventions
Continue to communicate with the school.
Take an active role in the multi-agency effort.
Role of External Agencies
Offer specialised assessments and services for students with complex needs.
Provide intensive training and consultation.
Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other external partners.

Recognition-Based Approach
Our attendance philosophy is rooted in a recognition-based approach that recognises both personal and collective achievements. This approach serves to thwart isolation, prevent victimisation, cultivate positive environments, nurture relationships, foster inclusivity, and ultimately cultivate intrinsic motivation among our children, families, and staff. This is in line with our approach to behaviour, where we recognise pupils for positive behaviour.

The Importance of School Attendance
School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system.

Poor attendance can impact on many areas of a child's development, including: academic achievement, well-being and social development.

Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.

Factors Influencing Attendance:

We understand that there are many issues which can affect school attendance, such as, health issues, family circumstances, special educational needs, socio-economic factors, academic challenges and peer pressure.

We are very aware that parental involvement can be crucial in supporting good school attendance and so we aim to work positively with parents to address any issues and support improved attendance.

At Chisenhale, in order to address attendance issues effectively, we aim to implement strategies such as early intervention and support for vulnerable families and to create a positive and inclusive school environment. We know that understanding the specific factors affecting attendance for individual children is crucial for developing targeted interventions and support systems to improve attendance rates.

Policies and Practice:
This attendance policy operates within the framework of statutory attendance regulations outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and subsequent amendments. We adhere to all other relevant legislation and national and local guidance on attendance.

Additional School Policies aligned to the Attendance Policy:

- Positive relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy

Safeguarding: All staff are aware of the possible link between attendance issues and safeguarding. They collaborate with designated safeguarding leads to address any child protection issues arising from attendance concerns.

Roles and Responsibilities

***Teachers*:** In the United Kingdom, teachers play a vital role in monitoring and promoting school attendance. Ensuring regular and punctual attendance is essential for the academic success and well-being of children.

Teachers are responsible making sure the daily register is completed accurately. They play a key role in supporting good attendance and punctuality for the pupils in their class by: creating a welcoming classroom environment, delivering engaging lessons, identifying barriers, developing positive relationships with pupils and parents, setting high expectations and providing support, where needed.

***Teaching Assistant and Learning Mentors*:** Teaching assistants (TAs) and Learning Mentors (LM) in schools also play important roles in supporting and promoting attendance. Their contributions can have a significant impact on attendance and overall well-being. TAs work closely with their class teachers in promoting good attendance. They can contribute to developing a welcoming and stimulating classroom environment and can play a key role in developing relationships with pupils, identifying barriers and providing support, where needed.

The Learning Mentor can work with colleagues to provide tailored support for pupils with more significant attendance and punctuality needs.

Attendance officer: The role of an Attendance officer in improving children's attendance in UK schools is critical in ensuring that students attend school regularly and achieve their educational potential. Attendance officer have a multifaceted role that encompasses various responsibilities and strategies aimed at enhancing attendance rates.

- Data Analysis: Attendance officers collect and analyse attendance data to identify trends and patterns. They use this information to pinpoint areas of concern, such as high levels of persistent absence, frequent lateness, or particular year groups or demographic groups with attendance challenges.

- Early Intervention: Recognising that early intervention is crucial, Attendance officers identify children at risk of poor attendance. They collaborate with teachers, parents, and support staff to address attendance issues as soon as they arise.

- First day calling for all absent children, when a message has not been received. If there is no answer on the second day, other emergency contacts are called. When there is no answer from any of the contacts, SLT are informed on the second day.

- Supporting Families: Attendance officers work closely with parents and guardians to build positive relationships and engage them in improving their child's attendance. They may organise meetings, and provide guidance on strategies to promote regular attendance.

- Monitoring and Reporting: Attendance officers continuously monitor attendance records and report attendance data to school leadership, governing bodies, and local authorities as required. They ensure that accurate records are maintained.

- Legal Compliance: Attendance officers are knowledgeable about legal requirements related to attendance, including regulations governing authorised and unauthorised absences. They ensure the school complies with these regulations.

- Safeguarding: Attendance officers are vigilant for safeguarding concerns related to attendance. They recognise signs of neglect or abuse and report them to designated safeguarding officers or authorities as necessary.

- Supporting Vulnerable Students: They are attentive to the needs of vulnerable students, including those with medical conditions, special educational needs, or safeguarding concerns. They highlight these pupils to SLT so that these students receive appropriate support to attend school regularly.

- Promoting a Positive School Culture: Attendance officers contribute to creating a school culture where attendance is valued, and students feel motivated and supported to attend regularly.

Parent Engagement Officer: The role of the Parent Engagement Officer in improving children's attendance in is critical in ensuring that students attend school regularly and achieve their educational potential. The Parental Engagement Officer works closely with SLT and other staff members to promote attendance and develop attendance improvement initiatives. They can support families by developing positive relationships, organising and encouraging parents to attend relevant meetings or events, offering support and advice to parents on overcoming barriers to good attendance and connecting families to other services that can help alleviate attendance-related challenges, such as housing support, counselling, or healthcare services.

Senior leadership team*:* Senior staff in UK schools play a critical role in supporting attendance for children. They provide leadership, set the tone for the school's attendance culture, and oversee the implementation of policies and strategies to promote regular attendance.

Senior staff, including the headteacher and assistant headteachers, lead by example. They emphasise the importance of regular attendance and set high expectations for all staff and students. They are responsible for policy development, data analysis, setting expectations, developing initiatives, identifying pupils/ families in need of support, overseeing interventions and monitoring effectiveness, making appropriate referrals, providing training to staff, reporting to Governors and communicating with parents and other relevant agencies. They also have a key role in promoting a positive and welcoming culture in the school.

Governors*:* School governors play a crucial role in supporting children's attendance in schools in the UK. Their responsibilities encompass strategic oversight, policy development, and ensuring that the school meets its statutory obligations regarding attendance.

Parents*:* Parents play a crucial role in supporting attendance in schools in the UK. Their involvement and commitment to their child's education can have a significant impact on attendance rates.

Parents can support their children's attendance by establishing clear daily routines, promoting good health practices, including proper nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep, fostering a positive attitude to education and promoting a love for learning. Parents should inform the school promptly if their child is going to be absent due to illness or other reasons, speak to the school if they have any concerns about issues that might affect their child's attendance, seek support if needed and work collaboratively with the school to address any attendance issues.

Children: Children also play a significant role in attending school regularly and ensuring their educational success. Children should strive to arrive at school on time each day, try and maintain a positive attitude towards school and learning, actively participate in classroom activities, build positive relationships with their peers and with staff, take ownership of their learning and ask for help from teachers, support staff or other trusted adults if they are struggling with anything.

Safeguarding Children

The school has a duty to safeguard the welfare of all students. Any concerns about a child's attendance will be investigated promptly to ensure their well-being.

Unexplained or extended absences will trigger safeguarding procedures, including home visits and communication with relevant agencies.

We follow ***Keeping Children Safe in Education*** guidance to ensure safe practices.

Removal from roll

This refers to the process of a child's name being officially taken off the school's register, typically due to extended non-attendance or other circumstances. Elective Home Education (EHE) is an option that some parents choose after removal from roll, where they take responsibility for providing education to their child at home.

Parents of pupils leaving Chisenhale Primary School or other than at the end of nursery or Year 6 are required to complete a 'In-year Admission/School transfer' form which can be obtained from the school office or Pupil Services. This provides school and the LA with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. The school will need to complete a 'School History' section and sign the form before this can be submitted to Local Authority. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.

Chisenhale Primary School will ensure that pupils are only removed from a school's roll in accordance with the regulations, and that all appropriate actions are taken in managing the actual removal. The most important element is to ensure that the school informs the local authority in a timely and agreed way. This will ensure that any pupil leaving their establishment is monitored by the Children Missing Education (CME) Team. Where a new provision is not established, it will be the admissions team's responsibility to complete a Child Missing Education referral. The local authority's CME systems will act as a safety net for children at the point of transitions.

School Times of the Day

The school day begins at 9am and ends at 3.30pm for children in Y1-6. In reception, school starts at 8.55am and ends at 3.25pm. The school gate opens at 8:45 each morning and closes at 8:55, to ensure that children have time to get to their classroom, put their coats and bags away and are ready to start their learning at 9:00am.

Nursery times – gate opens at 8:45 and closes at 9am.

Part time nursery children 9am – 11:45am
Full time nursery children 9am – 3:15pm

Children are expected to arrive on time and attend all scheduled lessons and activities.

Coding of Attendance

Attendance will be recorded using the DFE's statutory attendance codes, please refer to the appendix for coding.

Requesting Absence Leave and holiday requests

Any applications for leave/holiday in term time must be submitted at least 10 days in advance to the Headteacher. Applications received during or after a pupil has been on leave during term time cannot be considered and the absence will be unauthorised. Applications need to be made via a google form located on our website under the policies tab – https://chisenhale.towerhamlets.sch.uk/policies

Parents/Carers must provide supporting evidence of any exceptional circumstances and why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays. All applications will be considered carefully, including how the pupil's educational progress could be affected. Where the request for leave involves travelling abroad parents are asked to produce the return tickets before leave is approved.

Leave of absence during term time will only be authorized in exceptional circumstances.

'Exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the Headteacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time. The Headteacher will take into account the child's overall attendance figure when making a decision regarding the application for leave of absence.

Penalty notices

The school follows Tower Hamlets Behaviour & Attendance Support Service Penalty Notice Scheme Protocol.

The protocol is available here:
https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/education_and_learning/schools/School-Absence-Penalty-Notice-fine.aspx

Reporting a Child's Absence

Parents or carers must contact the school on the first day of their child's absence to provide the reason for the absence.

- Contact the school (phone or email) on the first day of absence before the beginning of the school day, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence.

If a child is absent from school and we have not received a message, the attendance officer will call all families to ascertain the reason for absence from 9:30am.

Definitions

In the context of school attendance and education in the UK, the terms "Persistent Absence," "Risk of Persistent Absence," and "Severe Absence" are used to describe different levels of irregular attendance by students. These terms are important for tracking and addressing attendance issues. Here are their definitions:

Persistent Absence (PA):

Definition: Persistent Absence is a term used to describe a level of student absence from school that is considered to be a significant cause for concern.

Threshold: In England, a student is considered to be persistently absent when they have an attendance rate of 90% or below. This means they have missed 10% or more of their school sessions. For most children during the academic year this will amount to 19 or more days of absence.

Risk of Persistent Absence:

Definition: The term "Risk of Persistent Absence" refers to a situation in which a student's attendance is at a level that suggests they are at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Threshold: While there is no specific threshold for "Risk of Persistent Absence," it is typically used to describe students whose attendance is consistently below 95% but has not yet reached the 90% threshold for persistent absence. As the school communicates to parents in days, we identify 12 days to 18 days as risk of PA.

Severe Absence (or Severe Persistent Absence):

Definition: The term "Severe Absence" or "Severe Persistent Absence" is used to describe the most serious cases of non-attendance.
Threshold: Particular focus should 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 find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

Support

When pupils are identified as having persistent absence or are at risk of persistent absence, school staff will meet with parents to identify reasons for the absence and to draw up an agreed support plan in order for the attendance to improve. This may involve actions such as providing the child with additional support in school or referring the parents to relevant outside agencies for support, for example.

Review

This Attendance Policy will be reviewed annually by the school's governing body to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with statutory requirements. Any amendments will be communicated to staff, parents, and carers as necessary.

Appendix 1: Coding

Codes	Description	Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Approval Education Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	In for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend/No mark recorded	No mark	Out for whole session

Appendix 2: PROCEDURES FOR LATE CHILDREN AT CHISENHALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The DfE (2022) guidance document, 'Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities' states that:

> *Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed (authorised)*
>
> *Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate.*
>
> *Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed (unauthorised)*
>
> *Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.*
>
> *Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.*

At Chisenhale:

Children get a late mark (L) after 9.05am

Chisenhale registers close 25 minutes after the start of each session. After this time children will receive a U mark in the register.

For morning sessions this is 9.25am for Ks1 and 2.

9.10am for nursery.
9.20am for reception.
For afternoon sessions:

EYFS and Ks1 registers close at 1.10pm
LKS2 registers close at: 1.25pm
UKS2 registers close at 1.35pm

Children arriving late sign in via Inventry and are marked in the register on RM Integris using the appropriate code. The time of arrival and any reasons are noted on RM Integris. A child arriving after 9.25am does not automatically get marked as U, the most appropriate code must be used, for example if they had a medical appointment would be marked as M. This task is completed the appropriate member of admin staff on front desk duty.

Further details are in the DfE guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance