

Pupil Attendance Policy

1. General

Parents or guardians of pupils of compulsory school age have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education by attendance at school or otherwise. (*Education Act 1996*).

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Pupil Registration Regulations 2006 the school must keep an attendance register.

The school is aware that when records are kept on a computer there must be a print-out at least once per month and that at the end of the year the print-outs must be bound into annual volumes.

The school is registered with the Information Commissioner under the:
Data Protection Act 1998.

2. Aim

The school is committed to a positive policy of encouraging pupils to attend school regularly. The school will work with parents and pupils to secure this aim.

The other purpose of this attendance policy is to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring that pupils who should be attending the school have registered twice daily, or a reason for non-attendance is known to the school.

3. Student Provision

All new pupils coming on roll will be on a morning provision (9am to 12.30pm for their first two weeks at Cavendish. If the student is finding it difficult to settle and manage their behaviour particularly in the unstructured time (break), then the half day provision may be extended for a further two weeks. Parent and LA will be notified of any changes.

It is not unusual during the first term for the AM provision to be extended so that more time can be given to the child and also for the tutors to monitor the student and to establish strategies. During this period the tutors will be in contact with parents / guardians to ensure that they work together to support everyone in getting the pupil in to school on a full timetable.

4. Taking the Register

Cavendish reception team will take pupils attendance register twice per day.

The register will be updated twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition all teaching staff will check that the pupils who should attend each lesson do so.

The school registers open at 9am closing at 9.45am for AM registration, opening again at 1.00pm and closing at 1.15pm for PM registration.

The register will record the following:

Whether the pupil is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- taking place off the school premises;
- approved by a person authorised by the Headteacher or SMT;
- supervised by a person approved by the Headteacher or SMT; and of an educational nature, including work experience, field trips and educational visits, interviews with prospective employers, or for a place in Higher or Further Education; and
- Link Courses where pupils attend an FE college for part of their time, or franchised pupils receiving part of their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under school supervision (e.g. sick children being taught at home), or attending approved sporting activity;
- When a pupil of compulsory school age is absent it will be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence; detailing the nature of the approved educational activity (for a pupil of compulsory school age).

5. Responsibilities

Senior Management Team will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;
- receive reports from the Attendance Officer;
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Attendance Officers report;
- ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is known by the parents.

The Head Teacher will:

- set attendance targets as part of the development plan and target-setting process;
- monitor progress; and
- ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school.
- determine (in collaboration with the Deputy Head (DH), Attendance Officer (AO) and tutors whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made;
- notify parents as appropriate that should a pupil of compulsory school age fail to attend school regularly his/her parents/guardians commit an offence;
- initiate with staff appropriate strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the child's LA over persistent absentees ;
- liaise with the child's LA and police when there is a clear need to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school; and

The Attendance Officer will:

- ensure registration of pupils entering the building is taken throughout the day;
- ensure that pupils are registered accurately;
- make regular checks on absence notes;
- oversee that the manual daily attendance register information is entered on to WS system by 4.00pm each day;
- ensure that the looked after children's attendance register via Welfare Call is completed as requested by email on the day that the request has been made;
- oversee the attendance arrangements;
- ensure that all pupil absences are noted and absence notes received from parents;
- work with tutors to ensure the efficient running of the system;
- make periodic checks of the registers to monitor pupil absence;
- make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence;
- Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days¹⁶, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
- Schools must also arrange full-time education for excluded pupils from the sixth school day of a fixed period exclusion. This information can be found in the Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England
- ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up by liaising with parents/guardians (if there is reasonable concern about a child's welfare, the Attendance Officer will immediately inform the Head and safeguarding procedures will be followed.
- deal with issues of inadequate registering;
- arrange appropriate training for staff;
- keep the Head informed of the progress of the policy; and
- advise the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved.
- make an annual report with statistics to SMT.

Tutors will:

- teach pupils about the need for regular and punctual attendance through firmly established and consistent tutorial programme;
- develop new strategies for combating poor attendance through pastoral review, tutor meetings and round up.
- reward good attendance with praise and contact with parents, careers, key workers and with the use of certificate's, commendations and prizes in conjunction with the school attendance policy and school behavior management policy
- ensure that pupils bring absence notes;
- make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering;
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absences or unacceptable notes; with the attendance officer
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with;

- contact parents/guardians over pupil absences where appropriate and feedback to the attendance officer
- keep the tutor group safeguarding lead deputy, Attendance Officer and Head Teacher informed of any signs of suspected truancy; and
- inform the tutor safeguarding lead deputy of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences, outcome to be emailed to Attendance Officer and Head Teacher
TG1 – Patricia Shaw
TG2 – Catherine Pratt
TG3 – Jason Dornelly
- Safeguarding lead deputy to make reports to the Attendance Officer and Headteacher on the efficiency of the system; and
- liaise with the Attendance Officer over training needs;

Subject Teachers will:

- check the attendance of pupils at their lessons; and
- inform the child's tutor of the names of pupils who are absent without notification.

Pupils are required to:

- attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session);
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school;

Parents / Guardians are required to;

Ensure that their child attends school and arrives on time. The purpose of good attendance is as follows:

- to enable pupils to have access to a broad and balanced programme of study, in accordance with the provision of the National Curriculum;
- Parents have duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable full time education. Parents may decide to withdraw their child out of school and educate them at home; they can do this unless they are subject to a school attendance order.
- Where a parent notifies the school in writing that they are home educating their child; the school must delete the child's name from the admission register and inform the local authority. If the parent has orally indicated that they intend to withdraw their child to be home educated the school must consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.
- Children with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans or statements of special educational needs (SEN) can be home educated. Where the EHC plan or statement sets out SEN provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. Where the EHC plan or statement names a school or type of school as the place where the child should receive his or her education but the parent chooses to home educate their child, the local authority must assure itself that the provision being made by the parent is suitable. In such cases, the local authority must review the plan or

statement annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that the child's SEN will continue to be met.

- to enable pupils, parents, careers and key workers to comply with legal requirements in respect of school attendance;
- Ensure that the School is informed of pupil absence on the first day of absence and to provide the School with written notification, letter or email as to the reasons for absence.
- to enable pupils to train and prepare themselves for the demands and requirements of society both at work and recreationally;
- to enable the School to fulfill a purpose as a safe and caring environment, free from the dangers and temptations associated with unauthorized absence from school;
- to support their child in attending school and plan any holidays appropriately so holidays are taken during the school holidays and not during term time. In cases where parents want to take their child out of the country during term time; the school will request proof of the child's airline ticket as well as a letter with the details of dates the child will be travelling and the reason for the trip
- to support the school in meeting the minimum requirements of inspecting agencies in respect of School attendances;

6. Home to School Contract

The Home to School Contract is signed by the parents and the school during the risk assessment meeting prior to the pupil starting at Cavendish.

7. Unauthorised Absence / Persistent Absence / Lateness Procedures

If a student has three unexplained absences the school will take the following action.

- 1) A letter home to parents asking for an explanation of absences.
- 2) If no improvement or no response from parent a second letter goes out to parents advising that a meeting will be convened.
- 3) If there is no response to second letter and student's attendance has not improved; a letter will be sent inviting parents / careers to attend a meeting. At this meeting a punctuality / attendance contract will be issued and agreed by all parties.
- 4) Following this meeting an Attendance Contract will be agreed between all parties in attendance at that meeting, if the contract is breached a home visit will be arranged and attended by Head Teacher and Attendance Officer.
- 5) If there is still no improvements a referral to the LA Education Welfare Service will be made.
- 6) If there are improvements during this period this will be acknowledged with a positive letter to parents / career.

8. Looked After Children

The Attendance Officer will report non-attendance of a Look after Child to the Local Authority on a daily basis this will normally be via the Local Authority nominated reporting medium, this is currently a company called "Welfare Call". The school has a duty of care to complete and forward attendance data on the day of request. If the absence is a cause for concern the school will alert children services and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

9. Inspection

The Headteacher will ensure that the School Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection by HMIs, registered inspectors,

10. Lateness

If your child is going to be more than 20 minutes late to school; the school will require a courtesy call to advise the Reception of this in order to record this on the register. Examples of this can be: an appointment before school; waking up late or leaving home late.

11. Leave of Absence

The Headteacher is unable to accept request from parents wishing to take their child on holiday during the school term.

In exceptional circumstances the Headteacher may be able to grant leave of absence request. Requests must be made in writing to the Head Teacher, via the tutor on the school's official form. The application must be made in writing by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides. The request must be placed in an envelope and marked for the attention of the Headteacher.

The Head will not grant absence leave automatically but will take into account:

- the age of the child;
- the time of the year proposed;
- Parental wishes; and the views of the tutor.

Any absences that are not authorised by the Headteacher will be classed as unauthorised; parents / guardians may be subject to proceedings outlined in section 7.

12. Short -Term Leave

Where a pupil becomes pregnant, leave will be given of no more than 18 weeks after which the absence would be unauthorised. The school will do all it can to support the pupil remaining in school as long as possible.

As long as the school receives a copy of the appointment card the school will class dental and medical appointments as valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence. If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registration has closed no absence will be recorded in the daily register. However, the registration notes will state what time he left the school site. The subject teacher will record the absence from their subject

The School may, in exceptional cases, sanction limited absence for young guardians until other arrangements can be made. The Head Teacher will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the tutor. The Head may also seek advice from the LA or appropriate agency before coming to a decision.

13. Religious Observance

There is no legislation or regulation or DfE guidance on this matter. The Head Teacher will review each application reasonably, and in consultation with the tutor and the parents.

The school expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

14. Taking a Pupil off the Register

The Head Teacher will authorise the off rolling of a pupil's name from the school register in accordance with the current Regulations, and when written notification has been received from the Local Authority in which the child resides ceasing school placement.

15. Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher will review the working of the policy with the Attendance Officer and report annually to the SMT.

Other Documentation that should be referred to:

- DfE Absence & Attendance Codes (Appendix 1)
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Rewards & Sanctions Policy
- Parent Attendance Contract (Appendix 1)
- Student Contract (Appendix 2)
- Home to School Contract
- Attendance Contract

This Policy is based on DfE guidance, see:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/s/advice%20on%20school%20attendance%20nov%202013.pdf>

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Unless legislation dictates changes

