



# Pupil Attendance Policy

## 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 1995 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*.

## 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.

## Taking the Register

Pupils' of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register ALL pupils (including those over compulsory school age).

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

The register must record the following:

- whether the pupil is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.
- An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

- one taking place off the school premises;
- approved by a person authorised by the governing body or the Head;
- supervised by a person approved by the governing body or Head; 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 must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence; and the nature of the approved educational activity (for a pupil of compulsory school age).

**The school registers open at 9am closing at 9.45am for AM registration, opening again at 1.30pm and closing at 1.45pm for PM registration.**

### **Responsibilities**

Senior Management Team will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes;
- receive reports from the Head;
- review the working of the policy in the light of the Head's report; and
- 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 if a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
- initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
- liaise with the child's LA over persistent absentees ;
- liaise with the child's LA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school; and
- make an annual report with statistics to SMT.

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 4.30pm each day;
- ensure that looked after children attendance register from Welfare Call is completed as requested by email on the day that 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;
- ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up by getting in touch with parents/carers (if there is reasonable concern about a child's welfare, the Attendance Officer will immediately inform the Head who will decide what action to take including informing the local authority).
- 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.

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 and staff meetings;
- reward good attendance with praise and contact with parents, carers, key workers and with the use of certificate's, commendations and prizes in conjunction with the school attendance policy and school behaviour management policy
- ensure that pupils bring absence notes;
- make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering;
- follow up cases of unaccounted for absence or unacceptable notes;
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with;
- contact parents over pupil absences where appropriate;
- keep the Head Teacher informed of any signs of suspected truancy; and
- inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.
- 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);
- if possible inform the school of their absence on the first day of non-attendance;
- bring an explanatory note on the day of return to school;
- discuss with the tutor any planned absences well in advance (eg a family holiday);
- make any request for leave of absence on the school's official leave of absence form.

Parents / Carers 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;
- to enable pupils, parents, carers 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 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 fulfil a purpose as a safe and caring environment, free for the dangers and temptations associated with unauthorised absence from school;
- to support the school in meeting the minimum requirements of inspecting agencies in respect of School attendances;

### **Look 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 reporting medium, such as 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 then social services must be informed, this would in most cases be to the designated social worker.



## **Inspection**

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

## **Leave of Absence**

Leave can be granted only by the Head Teacher on recommendation from the tutor. Parents will be expected to use the school's official leave of absence request form.

## **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.

## **Holiday Leave**

Parents can be given leave by the school to take a child on a holiday. Formal requests must be made to the Head Teacher, via the tutor on the school's official form.

The application must be made by the parent (or person with parental responsibility) with whom the child normally resides, but the form can be brought to the school by the pupil.

The Head will not give leave automatically but will take into account:

- the age of the child;
- the time of the year proposed;
- the nature of the holiday;
  
- parental wishes; and
- the views of the tutor.

If the pupil still goes on a holiday which has not been approved by the school it counts as unauthorised absence.

The School will only agree to absences of more than 10 school days in any school year in exceptional circumstances.

## **Short -Term Leave**

The School can legally grant short-term leave for family reasons. It is for the Head Teacher to determine the reasonableness.

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.

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence. If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registering no absence needs to be recorded.

The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers 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.

### **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.

### **Distance from School**

A pupil will not have failed to attend regularly if the parent can prove that the school is not within walking distance (defined as two miles for children under 8 and three miles for children over 8), in each case measured by the nearest available route, and where the LA has not made suitable arrangements for:

- transport;
- boarding; and
- changing to another school nearer to the home.

Where there are such occurrences the Head Teacher will consult with the LA.

### **Taking a Pupil off the Register**

The Head Teacher will authorise the taking of a pupil's name off the register in accordance with the current Regulations.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Head Teacher will review the working of the policy with the Attendance Officer and report annual 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

This Policy is based on DfE guidance, see:

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

## **Cavendish School**

Sara Craggs  
Head Teacher

Selina Laird  
Attendance Officer

Policy Reviewed: September 2013  
Review Date: September 2014  
Unless legislation changes