Inspiring Learning, Building Community

Attendance Policy

Cawston Grange Primary School

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"Education matters - it is an entitlement. School is an important part of everyday life: somewhere to develop self-confidence skills, to receive praise and encouragement, to learn about and build relationships, and to achieve"
(DfE guidance – Education Protects 2000).

Cawston Grange Primary School recognises that good attendance is central to a child's wellbeing; ensuring that they receive every learning opportunity to which they are entitled and helping them to realise their potential is crucial to their future success.
This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed in school; and
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.
Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others. Lessons missed cannot be repeated and 'catching up' on work is never as effective as the original learning experience.
Each year there are 190 statutory school days. This means there are 175 days for holidays, shopping, birthday treats and non-urgent medical and dental appointments. Therefore absence for these reasons should be kept to the minimum as it is likely not to be authorised.
Our school aims to work with families and children, investigate barriers to good attendance and seek out the right support at the right time to keep children in school.
Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Attendance Percentage	Weeks of learning missed
97.5%	One week
96% (our whole school attendance target)	One and a half weeks
95%	Two weeks
90% (persistent absentee trigger point)	Four weeks
85%	Five and a half weeks
80%	Seven and a half weeks

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletter
- report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance within the annual pupil report
- contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance
- contact parents/carers should their child's punctuality be irregular
- celebrate good attendance by pupils

Exceptions to this Policy

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and attendance expectations are set for all pupils, the school recognises that there will be circumstances where certain pupils have specific needs that require exceptions to be made. The school will always consider the individual needs of pupils and families who have specific barriers to attendance and will work in partnership with families to find mutual agreement in these instances.

There are occasions when the Headteacher will authorise a reduced timetable for individual pupils. This may be based on medical, health, or SEND needs. This can also be actioned when a pupil requires a re-integration programme due to a suspension. Reduced timetables are a short-term measure and are regularly reviewed with the aim of building back to full-time attendance.

Who to Contact for Information or Support

More information about the importance of good attendance is available in the government publication Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

The Headteacher, Kate Worthington, is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.

Other sources of support may be appropriate, depending on the needs of the child and the family:

Nic Brookes – Mental Health Lead

Alison Dix –SENDCO

Noreen New – Family support

To contact any of the above staff to seek advice or support, parents should contact the school office on 01788 816820 or email admin3594@welearn365.com.

If your child's absence is linked to a mental health concern, you may also find the advice from the following sources useful:

Government advice regarding mental health issues affecting attendance

Hub of Hope

ABSENCE

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school must be recorded and classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why the school always seeks information on reason for absence.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a legitimate reason such as illness, unavoidable medical/dental appointments, emergencies, bereavements or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences, which have never been explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get an attendance mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time that are not considered exceptional and therefore have not been authorised

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance can be resolved between the school, parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school we will work with the family to understand the problem and support the child.

Absence Procedures

If a child is unwell, parents are advised to check the NHS 'Is my child too ill for school' guidance before deciding whether or not they should attend school. If a parent is unsure, the school advise that the child is sent into school as normal and we will monitor them, calling parents to collect them if they appear to be too unwell.

To report an absence, the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9.00am. The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if no one is available to take the call. Parents can also report absence in person to the school office
- Contact us each day of the child's absence unless a specific return date can be given, for example when doctors have advised a certain length of recovery time or when infectious diseases require a set period of absence.

If the school do not have a reason for absence, the process is as follows until contact is made:

- First call to the listed contacts for the child in priority order, usually by 9.30am
- Second call to all listed contacts by 11.30am

- Absence reported to Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
- If the SLT have concerns regarding attendance or safeguarding, a safe and well to the house may be made. When completing a safe and well check and gaining no response, staff will leave a card in the letterbox asking the family to make urgent contact

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. **90% attendance means that the child has missed 19 days learning.**

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards the mark will be supported through our staged approach.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully; we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. Our school will work with families where children's attendance is a cause for concern, this may include: allocation of additional support through the School Nurse, Parent Partnership or referral to a case worker from the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS Team). We may also use PSHE time, individual programmes, targets and participation in group activities to raise attendance.

Staged Approach – How We Address Attendance Concerns

Attendance is monitored closely and reviewed monthly by the attendance team using a clear staged approach. This reflects our usual and consistent practice for identifying, supporting and addressing attendance concerns in a timely and proportionate way. We recognise, however, that each family's circumstances are unique. In cases of long-term medical needs or where unexpected and exceptional circumstances arise, this approach may be adapted appropriately, ensuring that decisions are made sensitively, reasonably and in the best interests of the child.

Stage & Team Member Responsible	Trigger	Outcome
HT, SLT, Class Teacher, Support Staff, Pastoral Team.	Attendance falls below the whole school target of 96% and the child's attendance or punctuality is of concern.	Class teacher to contact parents/carers: • Express concern about emerging attendance concern • Advise current attendance figure • Outline gaps in learning and/or attainment due to absences • Welcome parents to discuss attendance and discuss barriers to attendance • Record conversation on internal records i.e. CPOMS Attendance is monitored for a fixed period of 4 weeks
Stage 1 Attendance team	Attendance does not improve, the child	Letter 1 will be sent to parents/carers: • Expressing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of current attendance • Enclosing a registration certificate

	becomes at risk of persistent absenteeism	• Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence' • Welcoming the parents to arrange contact the school if they wish to discuss attendance further • Record conversation and documents sent, on internal records i.e., CPOMS Attendance is monitored for a fixed period of 4 weeks.
Stage 2 Attendance team and Pastoral	Parents have received a Stage 1 letter and attendance remains of concern.	Letter 2 will be sent to parents/carers: • Inviting them to a meeting with the school attendance team to informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of current attendance • Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of 'persistent absence' • Notifying parents that the child's attendance is being monitored and of the duration of the monitoring period. • Record conversation and documents sent, on internal records i.e., CPOMS • Pastoral team to make contact with parents/carers, to gain further insight into the absences, and offering support Attendance is monitored for a fixed period of 4 weeks.
Stage 3 Head teacher, attendance team and Pastoral	Parents have received a Stage 2 letter and attendance remains of concern.	Letter 3 will be sent to parents/carers, enclosing the registration certificate and inviting them to a meeting: • Informing parents/carers of ongoing concerns regarding attendance and sharing current attendance information • Explaining that a meeting is required to agree next steps to support improved attendance • Reminding parents/carers of their legal responsibilities and the definition of persistent absence • Requesting medical evidence for illness-related absence to support decisions around authorisation Meeting with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child: • To discuss attendance concerns and review current attendance data • To agree an action plan with clear, achievable targets and a defined timescale for improvement • To consider appropriate support, including Early Help and, where relevant, involvement of external agencies • To notify parents/carers that the meeting may proceed in their absence and targets set if they do not attend • To record all discussions, decisions and documents on CPOMS
Stage 4 Headteacher, attendance team and Pastoral	Parents have failed an internal school attendance target and attendance is below the level of Persistent Absence (90%)	Letter 4 will be sent to parents/carers: • Informing parents/carers of ongoing concerns about attendance and unmet targets identified at the review meeting • Informing parents/carers of attendance during the agreed target period

		• Enclosing a registration certificate • Notifying parents/carers that the school intends to discuss their child's attendance with the Warwickshire Attendance Service Team • Requesting that parents/carers provide evidence of medical appointments or illness to support consideration of authorised absence Meeting with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child: • Inviting parents/carers to a meeting with the Attendance and Pastoral Lead on a specified date to discuss attendance and review the existing action plan • Reviewing progress against agreed targets and identifying barriers to improvement • Agreeing revised or further targets, additional support and next steps, including consideration of external agencies • Confirming that the meeting may proceed in parents' absence and targets set if parents/carers do not attend • Offering Early Help, where not previously taken up, as a framework to identify household needs and support attendance • Agreeing a further review date • Recording all discussions, decisions and documents sent on internal systems, including CPOMS
Pastoral	During a monitoring period, attendance improves.	A Letter of Praise will be sent to parents: • Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period • Notifying parents that the school will continue to monitor attendance to ensure sustained improvement

Lateness

Poor punctuality also has a detrimental effect on children's learning and enjoyment of school. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss the beginning of the day's learning, school assembly, a time of celebration and many other important occasions. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage absence by creating a feeling of isolation and separation from their school community. Good time keeping is a vital life skill, which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we Manage Lateness

The school doors open at 8.40am and the school day starts at 8.50am, all children should be present for registration in their classroom at this time. Registers are marked by 8.55am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not present.

At 9.15am, the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them on site, but this will not be a present mark and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher to resolve the problem, but you can refer to us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Lateness is monitored daily and, where a concern around punctuality is noted, the staged approach below will be followed. As with persistent absence, each stage is reviewed monthly with consideration given to the circumstances of each case.

Staged Approach – How We Address Punctuality Concerns

Stage & Team Member Responsible	Trigger	Outcome
HT, SLT, Class Teacher, Support Staff, Pastoral Team.	The pupil is recorded as arriving late four times within a month	Class teacher to contact parents/carers: • Express concern about emerging punctuality concern • Advise current number of late arrivals and the total number of minutes lost • Outline gaps in learning and/or attainment due to lateness • Welcome parents to discuss barriers to arriving on time • Record conversation on internal records i.e. CPOMS Punctuality is monitored for a fixed period of 4 weeks
Stage 2 Attendance team	Further lateness occurs during the four week monitoring period	Letter 1 will be sent to parents/carers: • Expressing concern about punctuality • Informing the parents of current total number of minutes missed due to lateness • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities • Welcoming the parents to arrange contact the school if they wish to discuss punctuality further • Record conversation and documents sent, on internal records i.e., CPOMS Punctuality is monitored for a fixed period of 4 weeks.
Stage 2 Attendance team and Pastoral	Parents have received a Stage 1 letter and punctuality remains of concern.	Letter 2 will be sent to parents/carers: • Informing parents of ongoing concern about punctuality • Informing the parents of current total number of minutes missed due to lateness • Notifying parents that the child's punctuality is being monitored and of the duration of the monitoring period. • Pastoral team to make contact with parents/carers, to gain further insight into the lateness, and offering support. • Welcoming the parents to contact the school if they wish to discuss punctuality further • Record conversation and documents sent, on internal records i.e., CPOMS Punctuality is monitored for a fixed period of 4 weeks.
Stage 3 Headteacher, attendance team and Pastoral	Parents have received a Stage 2 letter and punctuality remains of concern.	Letter 3 will be sent to parents/carers: • Informing parents of ongoing concern about punctuality • Informing the parents of current total number of minutes lost Meeting with parents/carers and potentially child: • Inviting parents to an appointment with the Attendance and Pastoral Lead on a specific date, with the purpose of discussing punctuality, agreeing an action plan of support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve

		outside agencies, and setting an internal school punctuality target. • Notifying parents that should they chose not to attend or be unable to attend, the meeting may take place without them and a target set • Action Plan to be created and shared with parents/carers agreeing timeframe on when punctuality is to improve, clear and achievable targets that support both the child and the parents/carers • Offering Early Help as a framework to capture household issues and support with punctuality • Agree a review date with parents/carers • Record conversation and documents sent, on internal records i.e., CPOMS
Stage 4 Headteacher, attendance team and Pastoral	Parents have failed an internal school punctuality target	Letter 4 will be sent to parents/carers: • Informing parents of ongoing concern about punctuality and unmet targets from review meeting. • Informing the parents of total number of minutes late during the target period. • Notifying parents that the school intends to discuss their child's punctuality with the Warwickshire Attendance Service Team. Meeting with parents/carers and potentially child: • Inviting parents to an appointment with the Attendance and Pastoral Lead on a specific date, with the purpose of discussing punctuality, reviewing the current action plan, agreeing further targets and support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, and setting an internal school punctuality target. • Notifying parents that should they chose not to attend or be unable to attend, the meeting may take place without them, and a target set. • Action Plan to be created and shared with parents/carers, agreeing a timeframe on when punctuality is to improve, clear and achievable targets that support both the child and the parents/carers. • If declined at previous stage, offering Early Help as a framework to capture household issues and support with school punctuality. • Agree a review date with parents/carers. • Record conversation and documents sent, on internal records i.e., CPOMS
Pastoral	During a monitoring period, punctuality improves	A Letter of Praise will be sent to parents: • Informing the parents of punctuality during the monitoring period. • Notifying parents that the school will continue to monitor punctuality to ensure sustained improvement.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

There are 190 school days in a year. This leaves 175 days, including weekends, for family time, days out and holidays. For this reason, requests for days out or holidays during term time will rarely be

granted and only where exceptional circumstances clearly demonstrate that the absence could only take place during term time.

Any parent wishing to request a leave of absence during term time must complete a Leave of Absence request form, available from the school office. Requests will be considered in line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the DfE statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance.

- Head teachers must not grant leave of absence during term time unless they consider that exceptional circumstances apply
- Parents do not have an entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time. Requests for holidays will not usually meet the threshold of exceptional circumstances
- Any request must be made in advance by the resident parent, defined as the parent with whom the child normally resides
- If leave is granted, the Head Teacher will determine the number of school days a child may be absent
- The school may request additional evidence to support any exceptional circumstances stated
- Requests made after the absence has taken place cannot be authorised and will be recorded as unauthorised
- Requests made in advance but refused will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised if taken
- Unauthorised absences may result in legal action, including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice
- All unauthorised absences relating to leave of absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service on behalf of Warwickshire County Council
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service has the authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in line with Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the specified timeframe, the matter may be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996

Each request for leave of absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the individual circumstances and the best interests of the child. Any leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in sanctions.

How is attendance tracked in school?

An attendance report is produced monthly which provides data on whole school, cohort, class and individual attendance. This also includes a persistent absence report that identifies any pupils whose attendance has fallen below 90%. A monthly meeting takes place with the Head, administrative assistant with responsibility for attendance and the home school support worker and next steps to improve attendance are identified where needed. This may include the following:

- A whole school reward for good attendance
- Reminder messages to parents via the school newsletter
- Parents being contacted by the attendance team and/or Headteacher as per the procedures outlined in this policy
- Support from the home school support worker being offered to families
- Parents being referred to other sources of support

Targets

The school sets annual targets for attendance. Our school target and the minimum level of attendance for any child is 96%. Attendance data for individual pupils is shared with parents in the pupil's annual report but can be requested at any other point from the school office.
The school has a legal responsibility to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. **Equally, parents have a legal duty to make sure that their children attend school regularly.**
All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure a high level of attendance to allow all pupils to achieve their potential both academically and personally. The Headteacher and Governing Body are responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher reports attendance figures to the Trust Board on a termly basis.

Links to other policies

This attendance policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies, available on our school website policy page:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Relational Behaviour Policy
- SEND
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Code of Conduct (parents and staff)

You can also view the following useful documents on the attendance page of our school website:

- Examples of the letters sent to parents at each stage of the attendance and punctuality staged approach
- An example of the action plan template used to support improved attendance and/or punctuality
- The list of codes used on our registration reports