

Cavendish View School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Last reviewed: New Policy
Next review due: July 2025

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2. Policy Statement

At *Cavendish View School* we recognise the clear link between attendance and pupil achievement. This policy exists to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within our school by ensuring all parties are clear on school procedures and expectations. Good attendance is integral to achieving well at school, and it is our duty to ensure high standards of attendance for our pupils and to address poor attendance. Details of how we do this are explained within this policy.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Salutem Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any such factors and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

3. Mission, values and ethos

We believe that with strong roots, we grow and flourish together. It is vital that staff can account for their pupils every day to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is crucial for all pupils to attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%.

At *Cavendish View School* we believe that staff, parents, carers, pupils and all members of the school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality. All play an integral role in ensuring high levels of attendance.

4. Aims

This policy aims to:

- maximise the overall percentage of pupils achieving at least 97% attendance and improve punctuality at *Cavendish View School*
- reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of good attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- provide support, advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff
- outline clear procedures for the accurate registration of all pupils
- ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data
- ensure a whole school approach to develop consistency of intervention strategies
- continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies
- ensure attendance is approached in a multi-disciplinary, supportive manner
- remove all barriers to increase attendance at *Cavendish View School*

5. Expectations

a.) **Parents** – we expect you to ensure your child attends school every day they are well enough to do so. This is your legal responsibility (*see Section 444 of the Education Act, 1996*). If your child is not well enough to attend school, you must telephone the school before 9am on the first day of absence to tell us the nature of your child's illness and their expected return date. Please also telephone the school if your child will be late for school to explain why and their expected arrival time.

If your child has any episodes of vomiting or diarrhoea they **MUST** absent from school for 48hours after the last episode.

If **you** are unwell, we expect you to have arrangements in place for somebody else to bring your child to school. If this is not possible, we expect you to inform the school immediately.

If your child has to attend a routine (non-emergency) medical appointment, these should be made outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable school will need to take a photocopy of the appointment card or letter to code the absence correctly on our system.

Parent(s)/Carer(s) are expected to ensure that school is provided with all relevant emergency contact details. These are updated at the beginning of each school year. Please ensure you inform us of any changes throughout the year, especially to mobile telephone numbers as this is our primary method of contact.

b.) **Pupils** – all pupils must attend school every day that they are well enough to do so. This is a legal requirement and it is the responsibility of parent(s)/carer(s) to ensure this happens.

c.) **Teachers** – teachers have a legal responsibility to record the attendance data for their class each morning and afternoon. Teachers have a range of codes to input into register and it is their responsibility to ensure all pupils are accurately coded. There will be annual update training to ensure all staff are aware of the reporting systems for registration. Morning registers must be completed by teachers on *Nourish* before 9.15am and each afternoon by 1.15pm.

d.) **Designated Safeguarding Lead** – our DSL and SLT monitor attendance daily. If a child is absent and school have not received notification from the family, our DSL will make a telephone call home in the first instance by 9.30am. If there is no reply on the telephone, a text message and email will be sent asking the parent to contact the school immediately. As a process of good safeguarding practice, if there is no response to these communications within 30 minutes, we will contact the police and/or social services as this then becomes a safeguarding issue.

e.) **SLT** - It is the role of the Senior Leadership Team to promote and maintain good attendance for all pupils. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher work closely with the DSL to ensure policies and procedures are being adhered to. It is the role of the SLT to review policies and procedures and to be pro-active in dealing with issues around poor attendance and punctuality on a termly basis using current data from that term.

6. Roles and responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to promote good attendance and punctuality across school in accordance with this policy (See Section 4 '*Expectations*' for further detail).

Teachers have the responsibility to record pupil attendance on registers each morning and afternoon. This is a legal document and as such, teachers must complete registers and not direct other staff in the room to complete this on their behalf unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring all communications with home are conducted swiftly, and that the outcomes are recorded correctly by updating registers as appropriate. The DSL is also responsible for ensuring attendance data is collated and reported to the relevant authorities in a timely manner.

The SLT are responsible for ensuring all staff and families are aware of and adhere to this policy and related procedures.

7. Strategies

Attendance

The promotion of good attendance and punctuality can be achieved by the whole school community working together. To help us all focus on this we will ensure:

- our curriculum is well-planned, sequential, creative and meets the needs of the pupils
- high quality teaching and learning is evident across the school and is recognised as being essential to the promotion of good attendance
- pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes school and multi-agency provision as appropriate
- all groups of pupils, including the most vulnerable, are given appropriate support and attendance is monitored rigorously
- Individualised interventions are in place to improve punctuality and attendance (where possible)
- effective partnerships with parent(s)/carer(s) are developed through regular contact and appropriate support provided when needed. This includes monthly coffee mornings (shared on annual calendar with parents) and telephone calls to families by FLO
- parent(s)/carer(s) are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required
- attendance and punctuality are regularly discussed in Leadership meetings and individual class strategy meetings

- staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed

Punctuality

If a Parent/Carer is experiencing challenges getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the school who will try to resolve and implement support strategies where suitable. Initially this will involve a meeting with families to establish reasons for poor punctuality, and resolutions may include arranging taxi transfers through the Local Authority.

It has been proven through various studies that poor punctuality is a barrier to learning. It can be a trigger for dysregulated behaviour if familiar and preferred routines have been missed. If a pupil misses the start of the day they may miss work and pupils who arrive late can disrupt lessons inadvertently. It can also be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late.

The school day starts and registers begin at 9am. Pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register (9.15am) the school may request a meeting with parent(s)/carer(s) to discuss. Persistent lateness is classed as three late marks in a week. Failure to improve punctuality will result in the local authority issuing a Penalty Notice.

8. Response

Our DSL and SLT monitor attendance daily. If a child is absent and school have not received notification from the family, our DSL will make a telephone call in the first instance by 9.30am. If there is no reply on the telephone, a text message and email will be sent asking the parent to contact the school immediately. If there is no response to these communications within 30 minutes, we will contact the police and/or social services as this then becomes a safeguarding issue.

Requests for leave of absence *in exceptional circumstances* must be made in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher at least two weeks before requested absence. Requests for the following are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances; holidays, shopping, concerts and birthdays, and as such will be coded as 'Unauthorised absence'.

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for an absence, or has given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It's up to the head teacher how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted (see <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence> for further information).

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parental request. This includes (but is not limited to):

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- absences which have not been explained
- pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. Since September 2018 *Cavendish View School* have been able to issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority 'Code of Conduct'). These can be distributed to parents of a child that has accrued ten sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will be obliged to refer the case to the relevant Local Authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

Persistent Absence - Pupils are defined as '*Persistent Absentees*' by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This figure includes authorised and unauthorised absences. The DfE expects schools to intervene long before pupils reach the level of *Persistent Absence* (PA).

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the Family Liaison Officer as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution. We can then engage in strategies and explore how we can collectively increase attendance for the pupil.

When a pupil's attendance becomes a cause for concern (below 95%), parent(s)/carer(s) will be issued with a standard letter informing them that their child is at risk of becoming classed as PA (see *Appendix 1*).

If attendance does not improve after this, parent(s)/carer(s) will be invited into school to meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The meeting is designed to offer support and guidance (see *Appendix 2*).

The DSL will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance the DSL will be required to give consideration to the instigation of legal proceedings which may include Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

Removal from Roll

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

Provide comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing two weeks before their final day at *Cavendish View School*.

If a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, that child is classed as a ***Child Missing in Education***. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1



Date:

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

In line with our Attendance and Punctuality Policy, I'm writing to inform you that your child's attendance has fallen below the 95% threshold that is required for them to have good attendance at school.

As you know, every day missed from school is a missed opportunity to learn, and good attendance is linked with positive outcomes for pupils.

We are closely monitoring your child's attendance as they are at risk of being classed as Persistently Absent. This will happen if your child's attendance falls below 90%.

Their current attendance is _____ .

If this figure fails to improve, you will be invited to a meeting at school with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to support your child's attendance, and external support may be sought from the Educational Welfare Officer.

Please contact school if you are experiencing difficulties around attendance and would like to discuss this with us. We would like to support you wherever possible and ask you to work with us to improve your child's attendance.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C. Liley
Headteacher

Appendix 2



Date:

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

In line with our Attendance and Punctuality Policy, I'm writing to inform you that your child's attendance has fallen below the 90% threshold and your child is now classed as being '**Persistently Absent**'.

As you know, every day missed from school is a missed opportunity to learn, and good attendance is linked with positive outcomes for pupils. We have been closely monitoring your child's attendance and their current attendance is _____% which is well below the expected level.

As stated in our last letter, we now invite you to attend a meeting at school with our Designated Safeguarding Lead to support your child's attendance. We may seek additional external support from the Educational Welfare Officer to avoid the issue of Penalty Notices in the future.

We would like to support you wherever possible and ask you to work with us to improve your child's attendance. The meeting will take place on _____ at _____ . We look forward to seeing you then. If you need to arrange an alternative time or date, please contact the school office on 0151 294 4899 within 3 days of the date of this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C. Liley
Headteacher

Appendix 3

Table of Escalation of Interventions

| Attendance % | RAG | Intervention |
|--|-----|--|
| 100% - 97% Attendance is excellent | | Recognition of Achievement |
| 96.9% - 95% Attendance is good | | Recognition and encouragement |
| 94.9% - 90% Attendance is a cause for concern | | Letter to home issued Early FLO Intervention |
| 89.9% - 87% Attendance is a concern | | Persistent Absence Meeting with parents/carers Potential EWO involvement Potential Penalty Notices (Fines issued) |
| Below 86.9% Attendance is a serious concern | | Regular next action planning meetings Safe and Wellbeing Safeguarding Visits Legal Action |

Absence breakdown

Half day absent = 2 morning or afternoon lessons missed

1 day absent = 4 lessons missed

3 days absent = 12 lessons missed

2 weeks absent = 40 lessons missed

