Castle Hill School
Innovating, Communicating, Empowering

Pupil Attendance Policy

Policy Created	2013
Signed off Last review	November 2024
Review frequency	3 years
Date to be reviewed	November 2027

ATTENDANCE POLICY - Castle Hill School

General Policy Statement

At Castle Hill School we intend to provide a safe, secure, caring environment where everyone is valued and respected equally. We aim to provide an inclusive education where children develop independent learning skills and are taught according to need whatever their age, gender, background, beliefs or abilities.

National legislation, the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 re disabilities, race relations and special education needs underpin this policy, which has also taken into consideration national, local and school policies on Special Educational Needs, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety.

Our Attendance Policy is guided by Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities Published: 29 February 2024 Applied from: 19 August 2024.

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:
- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education to facilitate learning
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

Parents' responsibilities

If a pupil is prevented from attending school because of sickness or another unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of the pupil's nonattendance on the first day of absence before 9.00 am. It should be noted that a message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Wherever possible, parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children during school hours.

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Section 444 of the Act states;
"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence".

Term time leave of absence

Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities states : *Only grant leaves of absence for specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the 2024 attendance regulations (paragraphs 37 to 40)*
Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil *normally* lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

Requests for any term time Leave of Absence should be made to the headteacher using the attached form (Appendix 1). The form should be returned to school at least 14 days before the start of the Leave of Absence. A response will then be sent to the parents/carers as soon as possible indicating whether leave has been granted and the number of days allocated.

In considering the decision whether to authorise a Leave of Absence in term time the following **will** be taken into consideration;
- reasons given for the Leave of Absence
- the time of year /term
- child's review date
- clinic appointments and assessment dates
- Family wellbeing
- Child's education outcomes

In considering the decision whether to authorise a Leave of Absence in term time the following **will not** be taken into consideration;
- availability of cheap holidays
- availability of desired accommodation
- poor weather experienced in school holidays
- overlap with the beginning or end of term

Penalty Notices

Regarding penalty notices, we refer to Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities Published: 29 February 2024 Applied from: 19 August 2024

School's responsibilities

All the staff at Castle Hill School will provide an ethos which places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

School staff are responsible for ensuring that pupils have good attendance by:

- ensuring that attendance registers are kept accurately
- ensuring contact with parents and carers is achieved on the first day of a child's absence
- responding to absenteeism, consistently and with care and support
- contacting parents when they are concerned about a pupil's absences, and recording the contact
- consulting with the Safeguarding, the Children with a Disability Team and the Children Missing in Education Team if necessary if a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern
- Applying a contextual approach to each case.

Persistent and Severe absence
Please see: Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence, Published 7 February 2022 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence

The above document states:
'Schools that tackle persistent absence successfully are analytical about what is stopping individuals from attending. Particularly where persistent absence appears to be intransigent, there are often complex factors at play'.

At Castle Hill we work collaboratively and persistently with families, other professionals and agencies including school transport to improve attendance. We work hard to recognise the small improvements that are made.

We ensure ongoing contact and dialogue is maintained with parents and carers through telephone, e-mail, home- school books and face to face contact and we adopt a pragmatic approach to ever changing circumstances.

We apply the same approach to severe absences and provide an outreach service to support families. Our outreach service consists of:
Home visits
Virtual teaching
Provision of resource
This service is supported by the SLT, Teachers, Communications Teacher, Family Liaison Outreach and Support Officer and our ICT manager.

Long-Term Student Absence Risk Assessment are completed in these cases which includes information related to the student's presentation from their Bespoke Observation Schedule (BOS form), potential risks arising from long-term absence and the strategies to address these risks (See appendix 2).

Unexplained absence protocol

Registration
We use the following codes highlighted in Working together to improve school attendance Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities Published: 29 February 2024 Applied from: 19 August 2024.
This guidance states the following:
Alongside accurate recording of attendance and absence, effective schools have robust day to day processes to track and follow up absence and poor punctuality which are rigorously applied across the school. **All schools are expected to develop processes that meet the needs of their pupils and contexts*.**
Regarding late arrivals, we recognise that parents and families strive to ensure timely arrival at school but we are also aware of child and family centred contextual challenges. We, therefore, seldomly use the 'late' code.

Registration system:
Spreadsheet/Staff/Student register, Taken pre 9.15am:
This document receives updated information regarding both staff and student absence and the reason for absence.
Student absence will be labelled with the following to indicate the source of absence information.
Ⓟ Parent
Ⓢ Staff
Ⓔ Escort
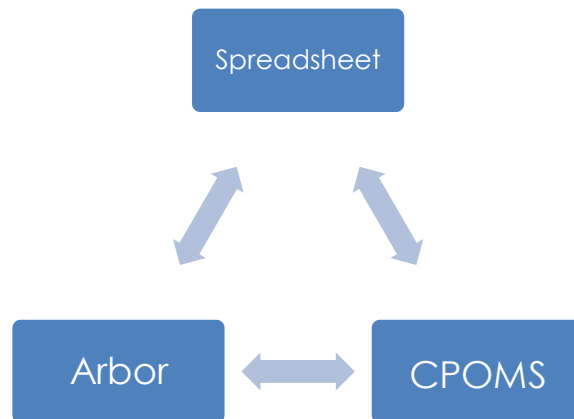**Registration Check,** post 9.30: Classes are called by the school office to ensure attendance information is collated and then placed on Arbor(attendance recording system).
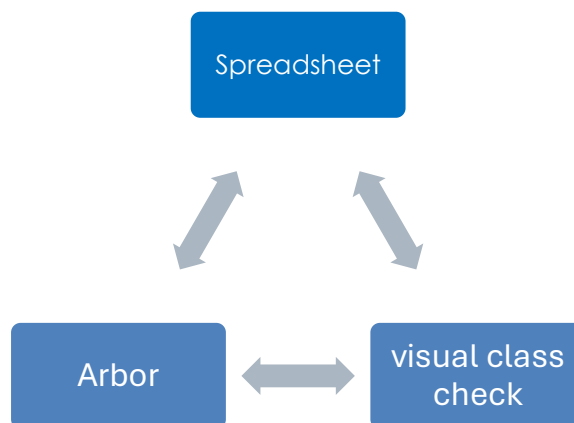This process should also check against the initial information received on the Spreadsheet/Staff/Student register.
If there is a change of code when information is recorded on Arbor, this must also be recorded on the Spreadsheet/ Staff register.

Code and information parity check: Information will be checked against CPOMS entries on a weekly basis to ensure codes, attendance and wellbeing information match.

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │  Spreadsheet │
                    └──────────────┘
                      ↗          ↖
         ┌──────────┐              ┌──────────┐
         │  Arbor   │  ←───────→   │  CPOMS   │
         └──────────┘              └──────────┘
```

Weekly attendance data audit: Business support sample registration data from Arbor and the spreadsheet with a visual class check, weekly on a random day, post 10.00am to ensure ongoing accuracy

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │  Spreadsheet │
                    └──────────────┘
                      ↗          ↖
         ┌──────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
         │  Arbor   │  ←───────→   │ visual class │
         └──────────┘              │    check     │
                                   └──────────────┘
```

Protocol related to new or unexplained absences

Person responsible No1/No2	Protocol related to new or unexplained absences All outcomes must be recorded on CPOMS Contextual, family and child centered information should be applied within this decision-making process		
No1 Admin No2 Admin	**Absence noted verbally through transport**	**No message received**	**Absence noted through phone call , letter/note from family/carer member**
No1 Admin No2 Admin	Inform DSL of absenteeism by 10.00am, messages taken and from whom.		
No1 DSL No2 Admin	Call parents to confirm absenteeism and reason. Main contact number should be used. Message should be left if no answer.		
No1 DSL No2 Admin	If no answer from the main contact a cycle of 2 extra attempts should be applied at 15 minute intervals.		
No1 DSL No2 Admin	If no answer/contact the 'second contact' should be called.		
No1 DSL No2 Admin	If no answer from the second contact then 1 extra attempt should be applied after 15 minutes.		
No1 DSL No2 Admin	If no answer then consultation should be sought from a member of SLT to decide the course of action. This may include a home visit. At least 2 staff should visit, if a home call is required.		
No1 DSL No2 SLT	Dependent on outcomes: further school support should be applied for example home visits on a regular basis or an amended timetable. If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead/key person is concerned that the child may be at risk, the relevant professionals must be contacted immediately to discuss the concerns. 1.the following organisations/ should be contacted: -Social care (duty) -Child missing in education department. -Police If contact is not made, contact any settings/schools of siblings. If the family are not able to be traced through your checks and the family are not engaging or responding to requests to contact the setting, contact the Kirklees Children Missing in Education (CME) Team on 01484 221919 and provide them with the details of the child and family.		
No1 SLT	Dependent on outcomes: the following ~~members of the Local Governing Body~~ should be informed: Chair of Governors Vice Chair of Governors Safeguarding Governor. TLT Safeguarding TLT CEO		

Repeated events are recorded via CPOMS to ensure safeguarding support and monitoring is ongoing.

New codes 19 August 2024	Main codes
Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm	
Code C: Leave of absence granted by the school **Use this code when school supports student and family need for example a student only attends certain days/times of the day due to their wellbeing, health and regulation need.**	
Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	
Code M: Medical or dental appointment	
Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided **Use this code when we are not aware as to absence. This can be changed in retrospect when a reason is received**	
Code H: leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school	
Code Y4: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances- **snow closure**	
Code D: Dual registered at another school	
Code #: Planned whole or partial school	
Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed	
Code T: Traveller absence	
Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school	
Code O: Absent without authorisation	
Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed	
Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made	
Code B: Off-site educational Activity	
Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational	
Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity	
Code V: Educational visit or trip	
Code W: Work experience	
Code Y is also used where the pupil is in custody	
Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school	
Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register	
closure Code S: Study leave	

(Appendix 1)

APPLICATION BY PARENTS/CARERS FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME.

If you consider you have to take a leave of absence in term time, and that you have <u>exceptional</u> circumstances, please complete this form and return to the school at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Guidelines from the DfE state that schools should **not** take into consideration:

- availability of cheap holidays
- availability of desired accommodation
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- overlap with the beginning or end of term

Pupil name ……………………………………………………… Class …………………….......

First day of absence ………………………………. Date return to school ……………………

Total number of days missed …………………………………………..

Exceptional reasons for absence

……
……
……
………………………………………………………………………………………………

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorized the Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified of the leave of absence **taken and a Penalty Notice could be issued.** The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. • A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

Name of Parent/Carer making application ………………………………………………………………

Signed …………………………… Dated ………………………………………………………..

(Please ensure you are giving at least 14 days' notice of the proposed absence)

………

Pupil Name …………………………………………………………………….. Class …………………………

Authorised		**Your request has been authorised for the following dates:**
Unauthorised		**Your request for leave has not been authorised because:**

Signed……………………………………… Date …………………………….

Dear Parents/Carers

The Department for Education states that a headteacher must not grant a leave of absence in term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances. If you consider that your request for a leave of absence is exceptional you will now need to complete the form attached. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If the leave of absence is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance and you nevertheless take your child out of school for a leave of absence the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

In the case of an unauthorised Leave of absence **we are instructed to notify the Behaviour and Attendance Service of the** Leave of absence **taken and a Penalty Notice could be issued for each child taken out of school.** The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. • A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

All leave of absence requests must be completed on the attached form. This should be returned to the school at least 14 days before the start of the holiday.

In considering the decision whether to authorise the following will be taken into account:

- reasons given for the absence
- the time of the year/term
- whether you will miss your child's review
- whether your child will miss any clinic appointments/assessments etc
- your child's previous attendance record
- Family wellbeing
- Child's education outcomes

Yours sincerely

Steve Perren and the Governing Committee at Castle Hill School

(Appendix 2)

Student: _____

Created: _____

Revised: _____

This Risk Assessment is to be used in conjunction with the student's **BOS (Bespoke Observation Schedule) Form**.
In the box below include information from the student's BOS Form.

Typical presentation

Risk Matrix

The risk matrix should be completed to determine staff numbers for outreach and associated risks

Criteria	Parent & carer usually present during visit	Parent & other adult family members present during the visit	Familiar parent only	Un-familiar parent only
Regular visit, no previous Safeguarding Concerns	Low Risk	Low Risk	Low Risk	Medium Risk
Regular visit, some prior Safeguarding Concerns	Medium Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk	High Risk
Regular visit current Safeguarding Concerns	High Risk	High Risk	High Risk	High Risk
Concerns of Mental Health and Wellbeing of Parent/Carer	High risk	High risk	High Risk	High Risk
New visit for any pupil	High risk	High risk	High risk	High Risk

All staff should apply a dynamic risk assessment prior to entering the home, in the event of any doubt of safety the visit should not be made and the school office contacted.

- Low Risk = 1 person visit
- Medium Risk = 1 or 2 person visit (SLT discussion)
- High Risk = 2 person visit

Additional measure for all 1 person visits, prior to leaving school the office should be notified of the following information:

- Contact telephone number for use during the visit
- Location of visit
- Expected arrival time
- Expected length of visit
- Expected time back into school

All staff undertaking single person visits should call the school office on arrival to the home and call when leaving the visit.
In the event that a call has not been received by the school office 20 mins after the expected call time they should ring the member of staff on the number provided.

Visits are defined as:

	Please tick
Educational outreach	
Students present as well within the limitations of their condition and are able to engage in learning activities. Educational sessions will be planned with reference to the student's Engagement Profile, PiP document, MAPP document, EHCP, the SMSC Calendar, relevant ASDAN and AQA Units (if appropriate), and relevant Curriculum Guides. Activities will relate, where appropriate, to the termly theme, activities that are happening in class, as well as whole-school events. Planning and assessment processes will support the process. Student progress will be monitored through the student's PiP document, MAPP document, EHCP, and Pupil Progress Document.	
Please make notes here regarding the student's specific condition if educational visits are required and the discussions that have taken place with parents/carers towards this.	
Wellbeing outreach/ Pre-school admission visit and other	
Students present as unwell and have additional challenges outside of the limitations of their condition.	
Please make notes here regarding the student's specific condition if wellbeing visits are required and the discussions that have taken place with parents/carers towards this.	

Main hazards	Control measures NOTE: Outreach staff can include: Communications teacher, teachers, department leads and DSLs.
Reduced access to educational/ wellbeing support	-Outreach staff and the family will organise outreach sessions at a frequency determined by student need, family need and capacity. - Outreach sessions will be delivered by staff members and assisted, where appropriate, by family members and health care in situ. -the outreach team, the family, and other appropriate organisations such as the Clinical Commissioning Group will continue to work towards **the long-term goal of the inclusion of the student within the school setting.** - All staff will apply vigilance in terms of Safeguarding and report any Safeguarding concerns in line with Safeguarding Protocols. -All visits should be recorded on CPOMS giving a general synopsis of outcomes. -Outreach staff will liaise with external agencies, and/or other professionals including health, to support access to services, professionals and equipment. -The school, where necessary, will facilitate on-site access to other professionals, as appropriate, for example; the Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Optometrists, General Practitioners.

Who needs to informed/involved as appropriate	Completed
Parents/carers	yes/no
The Senior Leadership Team (including Phase Lead)	yes/no
The Class Teacher	yes/no
The Class Team	yes/no
The Outreach Team	yes/no
DSL team	yes/no
The school administration team	yes/no
The school nurses	yes/no

I have read and understood the above risk assessment and agree to follow the procedures.

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

Complete the section below during each Outreach visit, in collaboration with parents /carers.

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HOME VISIT RECORD

Date	Activity	Outcome/Action