



Attendance Policy

Governor Review Date	Autumn 2016
Review Frequency	Annually
Date for Next Review	Autumn 2017
Head Teacher Approval	
Governor Approval	

Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

From September 2013, parents no longer have the right to request leave of absence for their children for an annual holiday. The amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations make clear that Headteachers *may not* grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*.

We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which children are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent telephones and provides evidence of illness (appointment card, letter or evidence of a prescription).

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if there is a regular occurrence of absence relating to a repeated problem, school would expect professional advice to be taken by the parent or carer e.g. appointment at the GP/dentist and evidence of this provided.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without good reason (no supporting evidence) even if the parent is supporting the absence.

Absence

Class registers will be taken punctually each day between the hours of 08:50 and 09:00, and between 13:00 and 13:10.

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher records the absence using the register which informs the attendance officer, who endeavours to contact a parent or carer as soon as possible as to the reason why.

Parents or carers are encouraged to telephone the school from 8.00am on the first day of non-attendance. If contact has not been made, when the child returns to school, evidence should be provided whenever possible.

A copy of the appointment card or letter should be sent to the school prior to the day of absence e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

If a child is not in school and we have not been contacted, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent/carer (first day contact) to check on the safety of the child.

If contact cannot be made on the second day, the Attendance Welfare Officer (AWO) will be informed. They will make a visit to the home address to establish the child's whereabouts.

Leave of Absence

The government has introduced legislation allowing the Local Authority to issue penalty notices to parents who fail to ensure their children attend school and this is incorporated within our school attendance procedures.

Parents should provide at least 4 school weeks advance notice in writing of any planned absence, the Head Teacher has the discretion to authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

The Local Authority may consider taking further action when unauthorised leave of absence is taken at the following critical times and circumstances, if deemed to be in the public interest.

Permission for **leave of absence will not be granted:**

- A)** At any time in September
- B)** For any student whose attendance was below 95% within the previous 12 calendar months previous to the holiday being taken (including authorised and unauthorised absence).
- C)** At any time during formal external examination and assessment periods, including preparation time (school to provide evidence to support)
- D)** If a holiday warning letter or Penalty Notice has been issued in the previous 12 calendar months, measured from the date before the first day of the leave of absence regardless of overall attendance during the previous 12 month period.

Warning letters will be issued in those cases where attendance is 95% and above during the previous 12 months unless taken at **A)** or **C)** above.

Warning letters will also be issued at the request of head teachers, for those pupils failing to achieve their academic attainment/potential, patterns of previous attendance concerns/punctuality, or any other concerns that impact on their learning.

When the Head Teacher has decided not to authorise a leave of absence in accordance with the policy they may make a referral to the Attendance & Welfare Service. The Head Teacher should specify whether they wish a warning letter (HOLPOL1) or penalty notice (HOLPOL2) to be issued. After consultation with the Team Manager the service will issue, at the request of the Head Teacher, either a HOLPOL1 or HOLPOL 2 to both parent(s)/carer(s) concerned. A Penalty Notice will be issued with a HOLPOL2 where the circumstances would support a successful prosecution for failing to ensure the regular attendance of a child in the event of the notice not being paid. Where the pupil has already been referred to the Attendance & Welfare Service and the case is in procedures, the unauthorised leave of absence should be considered as part of that process as the issue of the penalty notice may not be appropriate. A HOLPOL1 warns the family that any future unauthorised leave of absence in term time may result in a penalty notice being issued. If the leave of absence has not been authorised but is outside the terms of the policy the service may decide to take no further action against the family and HOLPOL3 letter will be sent to the Head Teacher.

Repeated absences and lateness

The school regularly monitors the attendance and punctuality of all children. The Education Welfare Officer (AWO) regularly visits the school to monitor attendance figures and discuss specific cases where attendance patterns are a cause for concern. The AWS may send a letter, or telephone the parent or carer, or may visit the home to ensure that they understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who take their child out of school when the absence has not been authorised and/or who fail to provide proof of regular absences and/or repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for not sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Children who are repeatedly late for school may also have this reported to the Local Authority, due to the mark after registration closes resulting in a missed attendance mark.

Rewards

Children are rewarded for good attendance in the following ways:

- Weekly 100% draw, with a £5 voucher.
- The possibility of winning the 'Caedmon Badge', as pupils need to have 100% attendance and be on time each day.
- Overall attendance reward for the class with the best attendance for that week.
- At the end of each term, pupils with 100% attendance are invited to watch a DVD.
- At the end of the academic year, pupils with 100% attendance for the full year are rewarded with a trip e.g. cinema, bowling.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body on attendance issues in the termly Headteacher's Report. The Governing Body has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The Governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

Class teachers, the attendance officer and the Headteacher collectively monitor attendance. If daily attendance deteriorates to less than 96%, an attendance concern is raised and a letter from school sent to the parent/carer. Children will be monitored, until attendance is 96% or above. If there is an ongoing concern regarding attendance and it continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Attendance Welfare Officer (AWO).

A detailed report on each child's attendance is included with their termly reports and annual report in order to keep their parent or carer fully informed.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually, or earlier if considered necessary.

In this policy, the term 'parent/parents' shall be deemed to include any appointed legal guardian(s).

At the commencement of each new academic year, parents (or guardians) of children will be deemed to have read and understood this Policy. The School remains available to clarify any particular aspects of the Policy where any uncertainty exists, and ignorance of the policy provisions will not be accepted as reasoned grounds upon which to deem an unauthorised period of absence 'exceptional circumstances'.

Every care has been taken in the compilation of this policy and the information provided is correct at the time of publication.

Any policies that have been referred to in this policy are available on the school website (www.caedmonprimaryschool.co.uk) or are available upon request from the school office. Written information that is normally provided by the school can be provided in alternative form.

