

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Statement on Attendance**

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. It remains a fundamental prerequisite of an effective school.

At Castledyke we aim to maximise our attendance rates by operating an attendance policy within which Governors, Staff, Pupils, Parents and the Education Inclusion Service can work together in a fruitful partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure that there is early intervention if a problem is identified, so that appropriate support can be given by those concerned.

As with good behaviour and academic success, regular attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based upon the premise of equal opportunities for all within the school community, so there is every chance for all to benefit from it, regardless of the differences that may exist between pupils.

### **Statutory Framework**

Under Section 444 section (1/1A) of the 1996 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

All those involved in our school community are responsible for helping to improve and maintain good attendance - pupils, parents, governors and all the staff alike.

#### **Pupils**

- All pupils are expected to attend school and indeed all of their lessons, regularly and punctually.
- Support from the class teacher, Learning Mentor & LA Attendance Officer and if required, from the Headteacher, will be provided to those pupils and families who experience attendance difficulties. This will be offered in a prompt and sympathetic manner.
- Each term pupils will receive a certificate for 100% attendance.
- Children gaining 100% for the whole year will gain a certificate and entry to a raffle for a prize. All certificates and prizes will be presented in full assemblies.

### Parents

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed fed and in a fit condition to learn.
- If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school on the first day of absence in person or by phone call, App or e-mail.
- A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent.
- Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance and asked to respond accordingly.
- Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their children during school hours.
- Parents whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems will be offered appropriate support from school in matters of communication.

### School

- All staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example.
- Attendance is the responsibility of all staff.
- The school will employ a range of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents and the Education Inclusion Officer (EIO).
- Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.
- The school will monitor attendance regularly and report outcomes to the EIO, governors and parents.

### Registration

Registers will be called for KS1- promptly at 9.00am and 1.10 pm using a pencil and OMR print out and officially closed at 9.10am and 1.30pm.

Registers will be called for KS2 - promptly at 9.00am and 1.10pm using a pencil and OMR print out and officially closed at 9.10am and 1.30pm.

After these times the mark in the register becomes an official late mark. Late marks are recorded and can lead to further action when reported to the EIO service in the same way as unauthorised absence is.

**A 'L' in the register means late (before registers closed) - Present**  
**A 'U' in the register means late (after registers closed) - Unauthorised absence**

If pupils fail to arrive before the registers close, they will be marked as 'absent'. Pupils who arrive after the registers have closed should report to the general office and have their name entered in

the Late Book and the register amended accordingly. If a pupil is persistently late, the Headteacher will notify the parents and request an explanation.

Parents are reminded that if a pupil arrives in school after the registers have closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming the pupil has to be recorded as an 'unauthorised absent' for that session.

'Late Gates' will be held as often as possible and all the children will be followed up with monitoring.

Castledyke records absences in accordance with the latest guidance from the DfE and LA policy as detailed below:

### **Computerised Registers**

The appropriate lozenge should be completely shaded on the report form with a dark pen or pencil. The following codes for authorised absence are listed below, as advised by the DfE.

#### **Authorised Absence (zero with appropriate code within it)**

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual refistration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Absence can be **authorised** if:

- the pupil was absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the Governing Body or the Headteacher of the School')
- the pupil was ill 'or prevented from attending by any avoidable cause'
- 'the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs'
- the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within distance of the child's home, and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following:
  - 1) the child's transport to and from school,
  - 2) boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school, and
  - 3) enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school near to his/her home.
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents and the conditions as stated in the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (6) are met
- there is a family bereavement
- the pupil is attending a Pupil Referral Unit
- a Year 11 pupil is granted study leave (this should not normally exceed two weeks)

- the pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (e.g.: if a pupil is attending the graduation of an older sibling)
- leave of absence is granted by the school for a family holiday of no more than two weeks (parents should be reminded that they cannot expect that, as of right, the school will agree to a family holiday during term time)

Note: The absence of pupils taking part in supervised educational activities outside the school is recorded as 'approved educational activity'. This is equivalent to 'present' for performance table purposes. To avoid confusion in an emergency, schools should not record pupils who are off-site as present.

The following activities show when the approved education activity category can be used:

- field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas;
- participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities;
- interviews with prospective employers or for a place at a further or higher education establishment (Year 11 only); or for a place at another school;
- link courses, whereby pupils attend an FE college for part of the time;
- franchised pupils receiving part of their tuition off-site at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school (ie: a flexible arrangement short of formal dual registration). This can include special tuition for dyslexic children and sick children being taught at home but remaining on roll.

Absence should be **unauthorised** if:

- no explanation is forthcoming
- the school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- the pupil stays at home to mind the house or to look after siblings (the guidance suggest that absence in such cases should only be granted in exceptional circumstances)
- the pupil is shopping during school hours
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions (e.g. a birthday)
- the pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period of time longer than that negotiated with the school (normally a maximum of two weeks)
- the pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval on their return.

### **Leave of Absence**

- The Head Teacher at your child's school has a discretionary power to grant **up to ten days** authorised absence during term time in any one academic year. This has to be exceptional circumstances and for the purpose of one family holiday- **this is not an entitlement**
- If holidays are taken that have not been authorised a **Penalty Notice will be issued** if there are 10, or more, unauthorised sessions (half days)

**Procedures for following up Absence**

- Absences must be explained by parents on the first day of any absence and the information retained by the class teacher in the green registration folder.
- The office will check the registers on a weekly basis and follow up by letter/phone call any remaining unexplained absence.
- Failure to respond to the communication by parents will result in the involvement of the Headteacher and EIO.
- Those pupils arriving late will be requested to report to the office and details will be recorded in the late book.
- If a child is persistently absent (or late) and their attendance falls below 90% in anyone term, the parents will receive a letter of concern from the Headteacher, a print out of attendance and request to contact school to discuss the matter.
- Failure to respond to this communication by parents will result in the matter being passed to the EIO for further action.

**Strategies for promoting Attendance**

- At Castledyke every effort will be made to ensure that the school offers the pupils quality experiences and a desire to learn and develop as individuals with a matched and relevant curriculum.
- Pupils will be encouraged to be active in their own learning and to take responsibility for, and contribute to, the success of school life.
- Pupils will be made aware of attendance issues and the targets set and encouraged to succeed, thus taking on a collective and individual responsibility.
- Good attendance and improved attendance will be praised/rewarded appropriately on a termly basis.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via Newsletters, the Welcome Booklet, Prospectus, Pre-School meeting, Parents Evenings etc) of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils absent for an extended period will receive regular work and a support programme to aid re-integration.
- Attendance data will be analysed and monitored termly by the Headteacher and targets set and reviewed accordingly.
- The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body, on a termly basis, pertinent attendance issues.
- Regular liaison meetings will be arranged between the Headteacher and EIO to identify and support those pupils experiencing attendance difficulties.

**Attendance Statistics**

All schools are required by North Lincolnshire Education Authority to submit attendance figures to the Education Welfare Service no later than 10 days after the start of the new term. Statistics on attendance are compiled for all school within the LA on a termly basis and a copy is returned to the school

**Monitoring and Review**

Attendance procedures will be monitored on a termly basis by the Headteacher and EIO and information provided to the Governors via the Headteacher's Report, to ensure that policy and practice are effective. The termly attendance figures will be used to help analyse the system and measure whether the figures remain in line or above the national attendance statistics.

The policy will be reviewed and revised as and when necessary, to remain in line with DfE and LA requirements and recommendations and to ensure it reflects current school practice.