



A1a Attendance Policy

Actions	Date / details	By whom
Date originally published	March 2019	IS
Adopted by Governors	March 2019	Governors
Amendments	July 2020 – Checked / Updated	IS
Adopted by Governors	Aug 2020	Governors
Amendments	AUG 2021 – Checked / Updated	IS
Adopted by Governors	Aug 2021	Governors
Review Date	Aug 2022 or before as required	

This Policy, which applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the School website and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Legal Status:

- Complies with Part 3, paragraph 17. Education (pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head teacher.
- The Governors undertake a review of this policy and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later from the date shown below, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

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.
- 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.
- The Headteacher is responsible for making sure the school keeps Admission and Attendance registers in accordance with the regulatory requirements. For all pupils of compulsory school age our attendance register records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. An attendance record is also kept of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- The Headteacher also ensures that a compliant admissions register is kept.
- The school calendar and dates when the school is open can be accessed from our calendar of events and website, www.castlehouseschool.co.uk
- Parents are notified of school emergency closures for such things as extreme weather by email. The information is also posted on the Castle House School website and Facebook page.

The Role of the Parents: Parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The Role of the School: The school is required to maintain two registers:

- An admission Register (known as the School Roll)
- An attendance Register.

Admission Register

This gives particular information about pupils who are currently registered as attending Castle House. For the purposes of day-to-day management of the school the admission register may be contained within the school database. The register will comprise information that is compliant with regulations set out in the education (student registration) (England) regulations currently in force. For each student, the admission register will contain:

- Name in full
- Gender
- Name and address of every person known to the school to be a parent or guardian of the student (and an indication of the parent with whom the student normally resides)
- At least one telephone number at which the parent can be contacted in an emergency
- Day, month and year of birth
- Day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school
- Name and address of the school last attended, if any
- Leaving date and ongoing placement

Attendance Register

The School is required to ensure that the attendance register for all students on the school roll is taken twice a day – once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

Each student must be marked on the register in one of the following categories:

- Present
- Engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site (approved by the head teacher and supervised by a person approved by the head teacher, including sporting activities, educational visits or residential trips)
- Absent
- Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of the school site or part of it)
- Taking authorized absence (granted leave of absence by the head teacher or a person acting on their behalf, unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause, observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs)
- Taking unauthorized absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken, the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

If a student is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorized by the school (parents cannot authorize absence – it is the school that decides how to classify absences). Authorized absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification of absence (e.g. illness). All other absences are treated as unauthorized.

Authorized absences include: medical or dental appointments, days of religious observance, and visits to future schools, exclusion, family bereavement and special occasions (e.g. weddings). All requests for absence must be made in writing to the Headteacher giving the school plenty of time to consider the request.

If a pupil is absent without explanation when the register is called, school staff will contact the parents the same day whenever possible. The absence will be treated as unauthorized unless an explanation is offered as satisfactory justification for absence.

Failure to Attend School

If a pupil fails to regularly attend school, we will work closely with the parents and pupil to resolve issues and develop strategies to improve attendance.

The school is required to inform the LA if a student fails to attend regularly. Independent schools have a legal duty to report certain attendance issues to their local authority: 3.5 days within a 6-week block (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence), failure to attend regularly, additions to the attendance register within 5 days and deletion from the school register under the 15 grounds identified by Children Missing From Education September 2016 Annex A (Appendix 1). In this last case, independent schools are required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the local authority (LA) in which the student lives.

Definitions

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. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from our school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

If a child is absent

- When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register and will inform the school office.
- When the child returns to school, a note from a parent or guardian should explain the absence. Notes are placed in the back of the register.
- A note, email or telephone call should be sent/made to the school office prior to the day of absence e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. Castle House will then be in contact straight away with the parent/carer, in order to check on the safety of the child.

Requests for leave of absence

- We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend e.g. a visit a secondary school, family funeral etc.
- We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance but normally this request will be granted.
- Pupils at Castle House enjoy 14 weeks holiday from school. We therefore naturally prefer parents to take their family holiday in normal school holiday periods. The school will, under exceptional circumstances, grant the leave of absence in term time. A holiday request form asking for such an absence should be collected from the school office and returned to the Headteacher. In addition to the exceptional circumstances listed account will also be taken of the pupil's attendance so far that year.

Long-term Absence

- When children have an illness that means they will be away from our school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home so that they can keep up with their school work.

Repeated Unauthorized Absences

- The school will contact the parent of any child who has an unauthorized absence.
- If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem.
- Pupils showing patterns of non-attendance will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer if the attendance has not improved after a meeting with parents.

Monitoring of Attendance

- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to monitor overall attendance and seek to ensure that the attendance figures are as they should be.
- The school keeps accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of five years.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way.
- Any ongoing absences, 'Lates' or unauthorised absences for holidays is followed up as quickly as possible.
- If there is concern about a child's absence, the teacher will contact the school office who in turn will attempt to contact the parents.
- Castle House School values attendance at school and pupils with 100% attendance in the academic school year are presented with a 100% attendance badge at the Annual Prize Giving.

Deletions from the Admission Register due to unpaid school fees Castle House School reserves the right to delete a pupil from its admission register where the fees remain unpaid following the first day of term. Parents sign a contract agreeing to the payment of fees before term starts. The school also reserves the right to charge an additional 2% on top of any unpaid fees. Where fees are unpaid the procedure is as follows

1. Contact parents giving notice of removal from the admissions register in ten days following the date of this letter. This letter will invite parents in discuss the non-payment of the fees to ascertain if any special arrangements for fees can or need to be made for the staged payment to ensure continuation of schooling.
2. Five days after the date of the initial letter write again / make contact to see if a resolution can be reached
3. Ten days after the initial letter contact parents again to inform them that the pupil should not attend on the eleventh school day
4. On the eleventh day the School will contact Telford and Wrekin CME (Children missing in Education) to inform that the child has been removed from the admissions register enclosing evidence of all communications and contracts.

Emergency Contact Information Every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern. Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

Where the school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and

- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register. 8 Under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 (as inserted by section 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

Registration Codes

/ \: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session.

A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded. Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity. This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of 10 any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments) Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of 12 school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher. If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. Administrative Codes The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because, for example The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause;

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.