



Approved by Governors.....

Headteacher.....

On behalf of Governors.....

ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Rationale

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate how Castle View Primary School expect, support, monitor and promote the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. Castle View Primary School is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved with the support of parents/carers by ensuring that leave of absence will not be taken in school time, other than in exceptional circumstances. Absence during term time for any reason interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

The policy is a result of consultation with the wider school community and an analysis of existing attendance data to establish current absence trends. It aims to ensure the enjoyment and achievement for all pupils at Castle View.

Principles

The Governors, Head Teacher and staff wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

1. Fully participate in school life
2. Enjoy and achieve
3. Feel a valued member of the school community

Aims

- To ensure that persistent absence is no more than the national average. Persistently absent pupils are those with 10% or more absence either authorised or unauthorised.
- To achieve 96% attendance by developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- To identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence causes concern in order to offer support.
- To identify pupils persistently absent from school (10% or more absence) to offer support in attending school.
- To track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress.
- To track the attendance of groups within the school.
- To identify main causes of absence and take action to address them.
- To ensure that leave of absence is not taken during term-time and the importance of this is communicated with parents/carers.
- To communicate levels of attendance with parents in order to support families.
- To build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove these barriers.



Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full-time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs a child might have.

Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Parents must:

- Contact school on the first day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance
- Update the school. This should be daily for each day of absence, unless the child has vomited and must observe the 48-hour non-return to school period.
- Request leave of absence for holidays/extended absences in term time but avoid these wherever possible.
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance

School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Designated leader must:

- Ensure registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education Regulations 2006.
- Ensure a whole school approach to reinforce good attendance and ensure teaching and learning encourages all pupils to attend and achieve.
- Ensure individuals or group attendance targets are set and understood by staff, parents and pupils.
- Support families in building good attendance.

Registration

- Parents should ensure pupils are in school for 8:40am for morning registration and 1:10pm for afternoon registration. School doors are open in the morning at 8:40am. Pupils begin working very shortly after this time.
- A pupil arriving between 9:00am and 9:15am or 1:10 pm and 1:20pm will be marked as late after the register closes.
- A pupil that arrives after 9:15am or 1.20pm will be marked as an unauthorised absence for the session.
- A pupil arriving in school after 9:00am or 1:10pm should enter school through the main entrance. Parents whose child(ren) are persistently arriving after 9:15am will be invited into school to discuss the lateness and seek a resolution. Where school action fails to bring about an improvement, the matter will be discussed with Education Welfare Service and consideration given to issuing a Penalty Notice.

Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The parent must provide an explanation for any period of absence from school. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to decide whether the absence will be authorised.

School will usually authorise absences where a pupil is:



- Unable to attend school due to illness
- Requires emergency dental/medical appointments. Wherever possible routine dental/medical appointments should be made after school or during school holidays
- Absent due to other exceptional circumstances.

School will not authorise absence for:

- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Days out
- Looking after brothers/sisters

School may request medical verification where a pupil's attendance is causing concern.

School Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance

School will:

- Contact parents on the first day of a pupil's absence, where no notification has been received from the parent/carer by 9:30 am to ensure the safety of the pupil.
- Where contact is not made by parents with school, school may visit the house to monitor attendance.
- Analyse individual attendance data to identify patterns of absence causing concern and offer support to families where necessary.
- Contact parents when pupils' attendance falls below 90% to highlight concerns.
- Invite parents to an Attendance Meeting with the Head Teacher, where attendance falls below 90%.
- Consider referral to Education Welfare when school action has failed to bring about an improvement in the pupil's attendance.
- Use Individual Attendance Support Plans for pupils with attendance difficulties.
- Use Parenting Contracts where exclusion or behavioural issues are affecting a pupil's attendance in school.
- In partnership with LA, use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions to support improvement to attendance or Early Help Teams.
- Provide appropriate support to pupils to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence.
- Complete a Common Assessment where complex and significant factors requiring a multi-agency response is identified.
- Implement a range of rewards for pupils with high levels of attendance and those improving attendance such as the weekly prize spinner for children with 100% attendance.
- Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through parents' evenings, pupil reviews and home-school agreements.
- Provide a full and diverse curriculum to engage and motivate pupils, including use of SEAL to promote emotional well-being.
- Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment.



Leave of absence:

The Law:

From 1 September 2013, The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 Regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances

Exceptional Circumstances

The Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher will determine what are exceptional circumstances.

The following may be examples of exceptional circumstances:

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons.
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by the employer.
- A family member is seriously ill.
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and a leave of absence is deemed appropriate.
- Leave of absence for children of serving members of the Armed Forces.

Additional Information

Castle View Primary School will ensure that all parents/carers receive a copy of the school attendance policy.

- Parents/carers will be required to complete a leave of absence request form available from the school office and return it to school.
- Parents/carers may be required to attend a meeting with the Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher to discuss their request for a leave of absence.
- Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for a leave of absence within 10 school days of the date of the application.

If the leave of absence is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'G' this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school, the parent/carer of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent, per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days, the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority may commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

In exceptional circumstances, Castle View Primary School will consider a request for leave of absence for one period of absence during the academic year.

In the case of absences lasting for longer periods of time that are not unauthorised holidays, school will endeavour to make contact with the child after 3 days of absence. This may be by the class teacher or Attendance Lead. This will be a phone call to the child to speak to them directly.





In cases where children are absent for longer periods of time, a home visit may be conducted after 5 days, where the child must be seen.



Persons responsible for attendance in Castle View

- Head Teacher
- Attendance Lead
- School office
- EWO

Review of Policy

- This policy will be formally reviewed every year.
- The policy is given in full to all parents of children who are starting school.
- A paper copy of the policy is in the staff handbook and the handbook for governors.
- The principles of this policy will be raised in the school newsletter regularly throughout the year.
- Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Head Teacher in the first instance.

Reviewed and updated: September 2022

Next review: October 2023



Appendix 1

Target letter

Date

Mr/Mrs

Address

Dear,

Registers for the whole school were reviewed recently and we would like to inform you that’s attendance is currently% which is well below the national average for primary attendance.

As a result of this, a target of 96% over 4 weeks has been set for by the Educational Welfare Officer starting on until

We will be reviewing this target after the four-week period and should the target not be met you may be invited to a meeting in school.

Also, due to this below average attendance, we now require you to provide medical evidence for all absences from school. If medical evidence is not provided, all absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

The Education Welfare Officer checks the registers regularly and always investigates repeated patterns of absence whether authorised or unauthorised.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Melarangi

Headteacher



First Day Contact Letter

Dear Parents /Carers

FIRST DAY CONTACT

It is part of our school policy that we ask all parents/carers to let us know the reasons for a child's absence. In Castle View School we use a system called First Day Contact.

The school office is open from 8.30am for you to telephone when your child is absent. We would appreciate these calls before 9.30am. This ensures that we know children are safe and also reduces administration time.

If your child is absent and you have not telephoned us, we will follow the procedure below:

1. We will attempt to phone you directly and/or send an absence text.
2. We will attempt to phone alternative contacts that you have provided. (Please provide the school with at least 2 alternative contacts).
3. If we still do not have a reason for your child's absence, we **may** make a home visit.
4. If a home visit is made and there is no response, we **may, if there are reasons for concern,** make the decision to inform the police.

Please let us know if there are any reasons why we may have difficulty contacting you.

If you change address or telephone number, can you please let school know so that we can keep our records up to date and can get in touch with you should an emergency arise.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Melarangi

Headteacher



Absence Request Form

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM

A request for absence should be made in advance -before the proposed leave of absence

PUPIL DETAILS

NAME:		Date of Birth:	
Class/Teacher:			

Dates of requested absence:

Date of return to school:

Reason for leave of absence request:

I understand that keeping my child off school if my request is not granted, will result in the absence being recorded as Unauthorised. This may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to me by the Local Authority for the non-attendance of my child at school.

All information supporting your application for a leave of absence must be submitted along with your application to school. This includes any evidence supporting 'exceptional circumstances' for consideration by the head teacher. Any evidence submitted from an employer must be on letter headed paper **and signed by your employer**. Any supporting information submitted may be used as evidence should the case later proceed to court.

Parent/Carer Name:

Relationship to child:

Signature:

Date of Request:

Office Use

Seen byAgreement

Date.....



Absence Request Response

Dear

I regret to inform you that I am unable to agree to your request for to be absent from school for the purpose of

I do not feel that the reasons given by you for requesting a term time holiday indicate special or exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the school's attendance policy adopted by the school on the recommendation of Halton Borough Council.

I am sure that you will agree that it is in the children's best interest to attend school regularly in order to ensure that they achieve their full potential.

Whilst I understand that you may be disappointed by my decision, I trust that you understand that it has been taken with the children's best interest in mind.

I would remind you that I am required to inform the Education Welfare Service of any periods of unauthorised absence from school. The Education Welfare Service will then consider if any legal action or the issue of a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Melarangi
Headteacher