

A nurturing inclusive learning community that enables everyone to be their best



CALTON
PRIMARY SCHOOL



CALTON
PLAYGROUP

CALTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PLAYGROUP **Attendance Policy**

Approved by Committee Name
Behaviour, Safety, Welfare Committee 11/10/2021

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Attendance policy

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly in line with Government recommendation, (which is 100%) and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Regular attendance is defined as “attending every day the school is open”.

Calton Primary School can only provide the education that the children are entitled to if they attend school daily and on time. This is a key factor to ensure that all children have the best opportunities to achieve their own potential and increase their life chances after their formal educational years.

They need to feel part of a social community to be able to add their own contributions and aspirations to this community, by allowing your child to do this will give them a good feeling of self-worth, and the knowledge that they will be able to go out into the wider world with confidence at the end of their formal educational years.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures – start and end of the school day

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Start of the school day

Our school doors open at 8:45am.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day: this is when the school doors will close.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open until 9:15am.

End of the school day

The school day ends at 3.15pm for Reception and Key Stage One and 3.20pm for Key Stage Two.

Any child who has not been collected by 3.25pm (R / KS1) or 3.30pm (KS2) will be brought by a member of staff to the main reception where they will be supervised by a nominated member of staff until the Parents or Carers come to the front door to collect them.

If your child/ren are being collected before the end of the school day school must be informed prior to collection, preferably in writing giving the reason for the early collection.

The Parent or Carer will be expected to inform the school if they are going to be late.

Each child being picked up late will have to be signed out and a reason given.

Any Parent/Carer who is persistently late picking up their child will receive a letter inviting them to a meeting to explain the reason their child is late being picked up.

Safe Collection of Pupils from School

Our children's safety is of paramount importance to us all. The end of the school day is a busy time, and our aim is to ensure children are dismissed carefully, under strict supervision, collected on time and arrive home safely.

Staff will release children at the end of the school day from their respective doors to a responsible person that is known to school.

If, as a parent or carer of a child at Calton Primary School, you make arrangements for your child/ren to be collected by another person, it is important that you contact the school office and inform the staff of these arrangements. The authorised person must be a responsible individual aged 16 years or over.

A password will be asked to be provided which the person collecting must also have in order to say to the member of staff releasing the child/ren from school.

Children will not be released to any person that is unknown to school or to another parent unless the school office has been notified in advance.

Any unknown person collecting children will be challenged by staff and permissions checked with the parent/carer. We will also check that children are happy to be handed over to these individuals and that they are known to them.

School may inform social care if a child is left at the end of the day and no contact can be made with the parents.

We take the safety and care of our pupils very seriously and may have to charge a fee for after school care, if Parent or Carers are not consistently fetching their children on time, or do not keep us fully informed as to why they are late.

A child may only be collected by a named adult who is listed on the child's contact sheet or by a named adult that the Parent or Carer has informed the school will be collecting that child on said day. School will not normally authorise anyone under the age of 16 to collect children. Parents and Carers should contact the school if this may be a difficulty for them.

Children in Year 6 may walk home by themselves with prior permission in writing from their parents/carers.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6) by contacting the school on **01452 527689, extension 1**.

The Head Teacher may authorise a child's absence for illness, but may question too many absence days if your child or children are frequently absent for illness. If your child or children are absent for the reoccurrence of the same illness then school would want to work with you as a family to see if further support and advice can be offered through the School Nurse to enable the on-going illness to be supported within school.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Where ever possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours. Medical or dental appointments are counted as an authorised absence; advance notice along with sufficient evidence e.g. appointment card, written letter or text is required for authorising these absences.

Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the L code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the U code. 6 U codes over a 6 week period will result in parents being formally requested to meet and discuss barriers to attendance with the Attendance Officer and Inclusion Lead. Subsequent U codes may result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

3.5 Following up absence

The school has a responsibility and a duty to know that its pupils are safe in line with the school safeguarding policy. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

- Contact by telephone on first day of absence if we have not been notified as to why your child is absent from school by 9.10am. If we cannot contact you by telephone then we will text you using our school text system.
- Where there is no response after 2 days, a member of the school staff will attempt to make contact at the home address. If the child cannot be accounted for then external agencies such as the police, social care will be consulted regarding our concerns.
- Where there is no response after 5 days the child will be classed as missing from education and the Education, Performance and Inclusion Team will be contacted. He/She will attempt to make contact with the Parent/Carer on behalf of the school.

In order to prevent children from becoming Missing from Education, the school is legally required to notify the local authority of all children removed from our registers outside normal transfer times, whatever the reason. Parents are requested to provide the school with all the necessary information about future addresses, new schools etc. in the event of planned changes of address etc. Any information the school holds will be passed to the relevant local authorities as required.

3.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Attendance records for relevant time periods are submitted to parents/carers with their child's reports three times a year. Attendance records can and will be generated for specific meetings where a child's attendance is to be discussed.

Parents/carers can request to see their child's attendance records as required. Alternatively, parents/carers can access their child's attendance records by logging into [eSchools](#).

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Children whose parents/carers are in the armed forces and need to spend together as a family following a parent returning from duty.
- Children, whose parents/carers are dictated by their employer as to when they can take holiday's e.g police, fire service or working for a company that closes between certain dates. (These requests will however need to be accompanied by a letter from the employer as to why the family can only take a holiday during said dates term time)
- A child with a parent/carer or sibling who has a life threatening illness. (This request will need to be accompanied by a letter from a medical professional working with the family, or the request will not be seen as exceptional. The request will not be deemed as exceptional if it is the illness of other extended family members)
- Pupils who are Persistently Absent from School for whatever reason will be monitored on a week by week basis. (These pupils are known as P.A. students)

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

The following are examples of absences that will **not** be authorised by Calton Primary School:

- Late arrivals after the register has closed after 9.15am
- Looking after the house
- Looking after brothers and sisters or sick relatives
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Translating
- Family Holidays or days out

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

4.2 Reducing persistent absence

As absence levels reach 10% it is deemed that the child is at risk of Persistent Absence (See section 6). School will take the following steps to ensure that all children are accessing education;

- Initial letters will be sent to parents/carers where a child was seen to be persistently absent in the previous academic year. These letters will outline that it is a new year, but that their child's attendance will be monitored, with details of who to contact should there be any concerns regarding attendance
- Should attendance continue to decline, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Inclusion Leader to explore solutions that will encourage improved attendance. A My Plan may be produced at this meeting to help monitor and review any agreed outcomes
- For new instances of declining attendance, parents/carers will be invited to have a conversation with the Attendance Officer to discuss expectations and barriers to meeting these. Collectively, we will look to remove these barriers. Should this not be successful, see previous point for next step
- If attendance has not improved or continues to decline a further meeting (or review meeting, where a My Plan has previously been produced) will be scheduled to include parents/carers, the Inclusion Leader and/or Attendance Office and a representative from the Local Authority (Gloucestershire County Council) Inclusion team for more detailed exploration of why the child has been absent from education and what can be done to stop this. Discussion will also be had regarding consequences should attendance not improve. A My Plan will be produced by the end of this meeting detailing next steps
- If, over an agreed period of time, there remains no improvement or a reduction in the child's attendance, it will be up to the Head Teacher and Governing body to decide if legal proceedings are to be initiated with the support of the Local Authority

Where there are clear extenuating circumstances that explain longer periods of absence, these will be taken into account. Though there may be a continued impact a child's attendance figures, this will be without prejudice and there will be no reprisals.

All of these measures are intended to reduce/remove barriers to learning.

4.3 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher and governors, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. Each case will be considered independently and all alternatives will be explored before fining is considered. This may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Why attendance matters:

Less than 5 days absence = 98%+ attendance

- *14 days absence (approx.) = 93.5% attendance*
- *20 days absence (approx.) = 90% attendance*
- *30 days absence (approx.) = 88% attendance*

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

Attendance will be monitored on a weekly basis on a whole school level and individually. The class with the highest level of attendance will be recognised as will the most improved class. Attendance leagues will be kept across the school and our pupils will be encouraged to take pride in their class' attendance and celebrate what they have achieved by being in school.

Attendance will be celebrated weekly via school publications.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis and on a weekly basis with the Inclusion Lead.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's attendance drops below 97% parents will be formally requested to meet and discuss barriers to attendance with the Attendance Officer and Inclusion Lead. After this formal meeting a pupil's attendance will be monitored over a period of 2 weeks. If a pupil's attendance continues to drop, (depending on the circumstances) a further formal meeting will be held with a Senior Leader (Head teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Assistant Head teacher)

If the pupil's attendance continues to drop the school will involve the Education Performance and Inclusion Team at the Local Authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10% (90%). If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10% over the course of an academic year, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

At the end of term 1 = at least 10 sessions absence.

At the end of term 2 = at least 22 sessions absence.

At the end of term 3 = at least 30 sessions absence.

At the end of term 4 = at least 38 sessions absence.

At the end of term 5 = at least 46 sessions absence.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Calton Primary collects and stores attendance data using eSchools and SIMS, which may be used for internal purposes. For example, to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The Behaviour Safety and Welfare governing committee is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

7.3 The attendance officer and Inclusion Lead

The attendance officer and inclusion lead:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Makes home visits
- Works with Education Performance and Inclusion Team to tackle persistent absence
- Refers to outside agencies for family support, such as Families First Plus

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information using the schools online system

7.5 Admin staff

Admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and pass onto the Attendance Officer

7.6 Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians are responsible for getting their child to school on time and ready to learn (ie uniform, equipment etc) and ensuring that their child attends school regularly – Regular attendance is defined by “ attending every day the school is open”.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Inclusion Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Behaviour, safety and Welfare governing committee for approval.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our [safeguarding](#) policy and the [Local Offer](#)

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be

		absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-

		term/bank holiday/INSET day
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