

Attendance Policy



CAPELLA HOUSE

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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, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

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.

Pupils must arrive at school by the time below each school day:

- 8.30am at the Secondary Centre
- 8.45am at the Primary Centre

The register will be kept open until:

- 9.00am at the Secondary Centre
- 9.15am at the Primary Centre

The register for the afternoon session will be taken at:

- 1.00pm at the Secondary Centre
- 1.45pm at the Primary Centre

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). To report a pupil absence parents should either call the site number 020 3146 9887 (Option 1 for Secondary and Option 2 for Primary), to inform the reception team for the site their child attends, or email the Primary or Secondary site. If the site staff are unavailable parents can record a voicemail.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

To inform the school in advance of a medical or dental appointment, parents can write in the home-school diary. Parents can also inform the reception team of the site their child attends by telephone or email to the school email address.

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 appropriate code (L).

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as late after the register has closed, using the appropriate code (U).

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up on any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and the nature of the absence will be recorded using the appropriate attendance code.

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 very exceptional circumstances (recorded as code C).

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 Head Teacher's discretion. The absence of a formal request may result in a legal sanction (see 4.2) and be recorded as code G.

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 on this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

The Headteacher will not approve any requests for term-time holiday.

The school works closely with the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and provides the EWS with relevant information on pupils whose attendance is poor or a cause for concern.

4.2 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, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- Several 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.

5. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

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 absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will involve our Education Welfare Officer. The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee (see Appendix 3).

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority levels 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.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The governing board

The governing board 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.

6.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

6.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concern about attendance to the Headteacher
- Works with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence

6.4 Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information into the school management information system (Arbor).

6.5 Reception/ Admin staff

Reception/Admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence, record it on the school system and follow the First Day Call Procedures if no contact has been made (Appendix 2).

7. Links with other policies

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

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
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
K	Off-site educational provision	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
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

C1	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted leave of absence for a temporary part time timetable
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
C	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
Q	Unable to attend because of travel	Pupil is unable to attend due to a lack of access arrangements - when the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-school travel which is not in place

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Pupil unable to attend due to distance from home to school not within walking distance, and when transport usually provided is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Pupil unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Pupils cannot be practicably accommodated in parts of the school when part of the school premises is unavoidable out of use
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	School site is closed unexpectedly (eg due to adverse weather)
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Pupil unable to attend due to police detection, remanded in youth detention, waiting trial or sentencing or detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Pupil is well enough to attend but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend
Y7	Unable to attend due to any other unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school
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

Appendix 2: First-Day Call Procedures

Reception or admin staff to action each day:

- Registers were completed promptly by 9.00 am.
- Listen to absence calls, and read absence emails (or however messages have been received).
- Bring together registers, lates, absence calls - produce the list of children absent with no explanation in the absence diary.
- Double-check in school before calling.
- 9.30 am Start first day calling for children absent without explanation, call everyone on the contact list until you receive an answer. Leave messages if there is a voicemail option and move on to the next contact. If you have text message systems send a text asking the recipient to call but continue to call each contact.
- They might get an overseas ringtone - is the family taking a holiday about which we have not been informed?
- Call the contact list at least twice.
- By this stage, if there is a good contact list (4 numbers minimum) a reply will probably have been received.
- If no reply at all, has the pupil additional agency support such as a social worker, if so, contact them.
- Is there any in-school intelligence, does anyone know the family?
- No explanation from a supportive family is very worrying - so don't just concentrate on children already known to be vulnerable
- If there is no answer or call back from any contact, the headteacher or DSL will refer immediately to children's services / MASH / Police and request a welfare call.

Appendix 3: Persistent absences

When a student's attendance falls below 90%, we are legally obliged to send out the below letter informing parents of this.

Dear Parents and Carers,

This letter addresses your child, [Child's Name]'s, current attendance rate, which is below the expected 90%. Their current attendance is [ADD HERE].

An attendance of below 90% is classed as persistently absent. In this first instance, we hope that by working together we can support an improvement in attendance. However, if there is no sign of improvement, we may make referrals to the Educational Welfare Services or the Local Authority Early Help Service to seek additional advice and support.

At Capella House, we prioritise regular attendance as it is crucial for your child's academic, social, and emotional development.

Why is regular attendance important?

- **Consistent Learning:** Daily attendance ensures your child receives uninterrupted instruction and benefits from valuable learning opportunities.
- **Academic Success:** Missing school can significantly impact your child's academic progress.
- **Social and Emotional Development:** School provides opportunities to interact with peers, develop important social skills, and build confidence.

We understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise. However, we kindly request your support in ensuring your child attends school regularly unless there is a valid reason for absence.

If you have any concerns or require support regarding your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Appendix 5:

Tier	Criteria	School procedures	Parents /carers responsibilities
1	90-80% attendance <i>Lateness related</i> School absence procedures followed	1.Admin/class teacher to inform DSL 2.DSL to discuss with parents/carers and find strategy for improvement via phone call 3. Provide parents/carers with resources to support school attendance 4.Further enhance enrichment offer to support engagement.	1.Active parental /carer engagement to support pupil's attendance 2.Reduced lateness records by 5% within the following 6 weeks 3. Parents/ carers to agree with school on strategies to improve attendance.
1b	90-80% attendance <i>Absence related</i> School absence procedures followed	1.Admin/class teacher to inform DSL 2.DSL to discuss with parents/carers and find strategy for improvement via phone call 3. Provide parents/carers with resources to support school attendance	1.Active parental /carer engagement to support pupil's attendance 2. 5% improved attendance expectation within the following 6 weeks 3. Parents/ carers to agree with school on strategies to improve attendance.
2	80-60% attendance <i>Lateness related</i> School absence procedures followed	1.Admin/class teacher to inform DSL 2. Official letter to be sent to parents/carers by DSL/ Headteacher 3. Non evidenced absences will be marked as	1.Active parental /carer engagement to support pupil's attendance 2. Reduced lateness records by 15% within the following 6 weeks 3. Parents/ carers to agree with

		unauthorised. 4. Face to face meeting to arrange next steps.	school on strategies to improve attendance.
2b	80-60% attendance <i>Absence related</i> School absence procedures followed	1.Admin/class teacher to inform DSL 2. Official letter to be sent to parents/carers by DSL/ Headteacher 3. Non evidenced absences will be marked as unauthorised. 4. Face to face meeting to arrange next steps.	1.Active parental /carer engagement to support pupil's attendance 2. 15% improved attendance expectation within the following 6 weeks 3. Parents/ carers to agree with school on strategies to improve attendance.
3	60-50% attendance Absence/ lateness related School absence procedures followed	1.Admin/class teacher to inform DSL 2. Official letter to be sent to parents/carers by DSL 3. Non evidenced absences will be marked as unauthorised. 4. Pupil to be referred to EWO (Education Welfare officer) for further action	1.Active parental /carer engagement to support pupil's attendance 2. 20% improved attendance expectations within the following 6 weeks. 3. Contract of commitment signed by parents/carers
4	Below 50% attendance Absence/ lateness related School absence procedures followed	1.Admin/class teacher to inform DSL 2. Official letter to be sent to parents/carers by DSL 3. Pupil to be referred to EWO (Education Welfare officer) for further action	1.Active parental /carer engagement to support pupil's attendance 2. 30% improved attendance within a full term 3. Contract of commitment signed by parents/carers