

Attendance policy

This attendance policy will be reviewed annually by the pupil and personnel committee of the governing body.

Date of last review: Summer 2018

Date of next review: Summer 2019

Introduction

At Carlton le Willows, we fully recognise the contribution that good attendance and punctuality can make towards ensuring pupils' safety and improving their achievement.

The aim of the policy is to:

- make improving attendance and punctuality a high priority;
- establish systems and processes to monitor and improve attendance;
- define specific roles and responsibilities;
- promote effective partnership working with outside services and parents.

General responsibilities

All members of the school community are expected to share responsibility for promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Parents are legally required to send their child/children to school daily (and on time) so that they can benefit from the education which is offered to them. As they mature, pupils are expected to take greater responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality, but the legal duty remains with parents.

The Academy has a legal responsibility to record the attendances and punctuality of all its pupils. We fulfil our legal responsibility through operation of the attendance policy.

General procedure for class attendance

Completion of class registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session and for all other lessons (including form time) is a requirement and an integral part of our attendance and safeguarding procedures for pupils.

The attendance team are committed to making early contact with parents for pupils who are absent, via a text message and if necessary follow up telephone calls and visits for more vulnerable students. The attendance team must be able to trust the accuracy of the registers as this is the bedrock for safeguarding.

Staff should be aware that two N codes will trigger an alert to parents. It is therefore vital that register codes are inputted correctly and completed within the first 10 minutes of the lesson commencing. Accurate codes will help to avoid distressing calls to parents informing them their child is absent when they are actually in school.

Likewise it will help to prevent a more worrying safeguarding concern if the Academy fails to notify parents in a timely manner that their child is absent due to incorrect or confusing marks being entered on SIMS.

Teachers and staff supervising classes are expected to:

1. Take the class register and save it within the first 10 minutes of each lesson including double and triple lessons where necessary. Staff need only enter one of the following register codes:

/ Present in lesson/form period
N Reason for absence unknown
L Late for lesson (enter how many minutes late)

2. Take a paper register if the class register cannot be taken electronically.
3. Take a quick head count after taking an electronic or paper register for a class which the teacher or supervising staff does not know and check, if necessary, SIMS for the photographs of pupils, where identity is an issue.
4. After taking an electronic register, report all unknown absences (N) where a pupil was present in the preceding lesson (use SIMS 'view today' option), but is not in yours to the attendance team and student support via a high priority email. Additionally, email contact should also be made immediately with the attendance team and student support for those pupils who are now present, but according to the electronic register had been absent for the preceding lesson/s.

This email should contain details of where the pupil states they had been when the absence codes had been entered. This will help to avoid internal truancy and clarify misleading marks.

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Immediately after taking a paper register, report individual pupil absences to the attendance team and student support via high priority email. If all pupils in the class are present confirm this by email to the attendance team. This will prevent time delays in the inputting of paper registers.

5. Leave pre-entered authorised attendance codes unaltered and never override them unless the pupil is physically in the lesson/form time. Please inform the attendance team immediately if a pupil attends your class, when they are shown under a different code or you suspect they should be in another location/lesson.
6. Inform teachers and the attendance team, ordinarily at least 24 hours in advance, of any pupil(s) likely to be absent from class via high priority email.
7. Provide pupils who temporarily leave a lesson with an 'out of lesson' or 'LRC' permit.
8. Require pupils to present an 'appointment permit' if they ask to leave class to attend a medical or dental appointment or interview (pupils without an appointment permit should not be allowed to leave the lesson).
9. Record a pupil late (together with the number of minutes they were late) if they arrive more than 5 minutes after the published start of a lesson. If a pupil has been marked absent and they then arrive late, the register code should be amended from N to L (entering how many minutes late). This is vital to avoid unnecessary safeguarding concerns.

10. Issue a C4 unless there is valid reason for the lateness.
11. Provide a pupil with a note or inform the class teacher if a pupil is delayed to the extent they are likely to be late for their next lesson.
12. Notify the senior leader responsible for the curriculum or data manager of any changes made to sets/classes due to internal or external pupil movement.
13. Consult the attendance team prior to scheduling any major timetabling alterations to ensure attendance marks are captured and the attendance team are aware of where each pupil will be.

General procedure for dealing with lateness

Parents should ensure their child arrives promptly for lesson 1, which starts at 8.30am.

Pupils should therefore be on the school grounds by 8.25am.

It is school policy to record a late mark, together with the number of minutes late, for a pupil who arrives more than 5 minutes after the published start of a lesson/form time. Whilst the Academy recognises that, in some instances, late arrival stems from unavoidable circumstances, staff are required to take action if there is no valid reason for lateness.

Unless a member of staff considers a pupil does have a valid reason for being late a C4-other will be given under the following circumstances:

- When a pupil arrives more than 5 minutes late for class (if a member of staff delays a pupil to the extent they are likely to be late for their next lesson, they must provide the pupil with a note).
- When a pupil arrives at the school gates after 8.30am. This detention will be issued via the late gate procedure, which operates periodically between 8.30am and 9.00am.

Whilst, class teachers should be responsible for the issue of late sanctions for their class it is clear that some pupils will attempt to avoid a sanction by failing to attend the whole lesson and commence study at the next period. The practise of gaining a brief explanation for pupils who have been absent for the preceding period/s and supplying this information to the attendance team, will be vital in trying to deter lateness and internal truancy. Following receipt of this information the attendance team will investigate the pupil's explanation and initiate a sanction if felt appropriate.

General procedure for giving permission for a pupil to leave class

Staff may give permission for a pupil to temporarily leave a lesson. Valid reasons include: to use the toilet, to report to another colleague or to go to the LRC. The teacher or member of staff responsible for supervising the group must give the pupil an 'out of lesson' or 'LRC' permit so that the pupil can demonstrate they have authorisation if challenged.

Pupils may also be allowed to leave class if they present an appointment permit or have a time out card.

General procedure for requesting pupils to be out of their usual lessons

A pupil out of lesson request form should be completed at least 24 hours in advance of any occasion when a pupil(s) is taken out of their usual timetabled lesson(s) (exemptions include examinations, year group assemblies, Health/Wellbeing and disciplinary procedures, where separate registration arrangements will apply).

Once approval has been given the member of staff making the request should pass a copy of this form to the attendance team, west reception or the nearest student support base. Details of the trip/activity, together with the pupils involved should, where practicable, be placed on the weekly or daily staff bulletin.

The appropriate attendance codes will be entered in advance. As previously stated, teachers should leave pre-entered authorised attendance codes unaltered and should not override them unless the pupil is physically in the lesson.

Prior to the event starting, a register should be taken by the teacher in charge and the attendance team notified of any absentees immediately.

The attendance team, west reception or student support should be informed of details relating to any other approved pupil absence by the member of staff responsible for organising that provision, for example work experience; education off site, such as college.

General procedure for reporting a child's absence from school

Reducing absence from school is a key priority for Carlton le Willows Academy. Missing significant periods of school is proven to have a detrimental effect on students' attainment levels, disrupts school routines and can leave young people vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Above all, missing school seriously affects children's long-term life opportunities.

At Carlton le Willows Academy we recognise that regular attendance at school is the most critical factor in ensuring academic attainment and progress. We have a clear expectation that students should attend and maintain an attendance level of 97% and above.

If a child is absent, parents should either phone the school absence line shown on the website (0115 9565008 extension 259), giving the student's name, year, tutor group and reason for the absence every day of the child's absence before 8.30am. Alternatively, these details can be emailed to attendance@clwacademy.co.uk at any time.

If a child's absence has not been reported, parents will be contacted by text message, email, telephone or home visit. In all cases, the Academy will determine whether to authorise an absence. It is also important to inform us of any personal issues or changes of circumstance that might affect your child's attendance.

Alternatively parents can complete an online absence notification form on the website or fill in an absence slip out of their child's planner. Absence slips should be passed to student support on arrival at school. Parents may use an absence slip to inform the school in advance of any known future absence.

Daily absence calls are requested from parents to ensure safeguarding procedures are followed. For example a parent may suggest their child will be absent for 3 days, but if improved, may send them in on the second day. Without daily absence reporting, the school would still be expecting their absence to last 3 days and would not be in a position to alert parents if they failed to attend on the second day, which could compromise pupil

safeguarding if an incident occurred on the way to school. It is for this reason daily absence calls are required

Procedure for medical/dental appointments and other short term leave of absence

The Academy asks parents, where possible, to arrange medical or dental appointments out of school hours.

If an appointment can only be arranged during the school day, parents are asked to provide their child with a letter or to complete an absence slip out of their child's planner. The letter or absence slip should be taken to student support or the attendance team by the pupil. They will then be given an appointment permit to show their teacher when they need to leave class.

Any such absences must be entered on SIMS, giving the time the pupil needs to leave the Academy and the purpose, unless sensitive. The initials of the person entering any information on SIMS should be clearly legible.

The pupil is required to sign out of school (and back in if they return the same day) via the attendance office based in East. Sixth formers are asked to sign out/in via the sixth form reception.

Holiday absence procedure

It is Academy policy not to authorise holiday absence during term time except in exceptional circumstances.

If a parent still wishes to apply for leave of absence for a family holiday which would result in their child missing time from school then they may request a holiday application form from the attendance office in East.

Procedure for elective home education

Parents may elect to home educate at any stage up to the end of compulsory school age. Parents who choose to educate their child at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including bearing the cost of any public examinations. Parents must also ensure that their child receives suitable full-time education for as long as they are being educated at home.

When a parent is thinking of deregistering their child from school to home educate, the Academy's deputy head for inclusion should explore in detail with the parents the full implications of taking their child off roll.

Parents are required to inform the headteacher in writing if they do decide to deregister their child. The deputy head for inclusion will inform the local authority within 14 days of the parent's written decision to deregister their child.

Procedure for investigating pupil absence

1. Teachers are expected to report all unknown absences where a pupil(s) was present in the preceding lesson via e mail to the attendance team. The absence will then be investigated and appropriate action taken.
2. First day contact will be made by the **attendance team** with a parent/carer where a pupil does not arrive at school and the Academy has not been informed of their absence. Dependent upon the individual circumstances this contact might be via text, email, telephone or personal home visit.

Where no response has been received following initial first day contact, the attendance team wherever possible will conduct a home visit. If there is, no response at the home address a contact card will be left requesting urgent communication with the attendance team.

3. Where a pupil has returned to school after an absence, but the Academy has not been provided with a reason for that absence, the attendance team will make continued attempts to contact the parent/carer of the child on the day they return to school to obtain an explanation for absence. If there is a continued failure to respond to calls or written requests for information, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This can be amended later should further satisfactory information be given for the absence.
4. Home visits will be prioritised if the pupil is deemed vulnerable, such as being subject to a child protection plan.
5. For more prolonged absences the Missing Pupil Officer for Nottinghamshire should be notified. Continued home visits should be pursued during this time and the liaison with other outside agencies considered. All parental contact and visits must be logged onto SIMS and initialled by the author.

Involvement of Nottinghamshire County Council Family Services

Family Service support involves specific interventions to improve the attendance of pupils identified as persistent absentees or following up pupils who have been continuously absent without authorisation from school for 10 days or more.

The attendance team are able to make specific requests to the Early Help services for additional support. Parents are encouraged to make early contact with the attendance team should they have concerns over a deterioration in attendance of their child.

Procedure for supporting pupils during and after absence from school

It is teachers who are expected to plan the support for any pupil who has been absent due to short term illness by providing them with help and resources so they can catch up on work missed. Where a pupil is absent for a longer period of time due to illness or exclusion, teachers are also expected to provide appropriate learning materials or to give direction on how to access relevant learning resources through the website, Moodle or the internet. Heads of department are responsible for maintaining oversight for this area of Academy provision.

Further support for pupils during and after long term absence may include:

- arranging home tuition when applicable;
- arranging off site provision;
- developing personalised learning programmes in discussion with parents, these may include renegotiated timetables, alternative curriculum opportunities or flexi-schooling.

The deputy head for inclusion is responsible for this area of Academy provision.

The attendance team will be responsible for written requests to the Health Related Education Team (HRET) if the absence of a pupil fits the criteria for their involvement (medical and anxiety).

If any staff member becomes aware of any pre-planned medical operations, which will result in at least 10 school days being lost, then contact should be made with the attendance team to enable a timely referral being made.

Procedure for analysing attendance data

SIMS system is used to access pupil / group and overall attendance / absence data for analysis. This information is used:

- to track individual, group and overall attendance/absence levels;
- to highlight underachievers who are also poor attendees;
- for self-evaluation and improvement of strategic planning;
- to support the management of attendance issues.

Pupil attendance is a standing item on the pupil and personnel committee of the governing body. A report on pupil attendance is presented to governors termly through the head teacher's report to the governing body.

Attendance in the sixth form

As with pupils of compulsory school age, attendance procedures apply to the sixth form students, including the marking of class registers. Commensurate with their age, sixth form students are expected to take greater responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality.

In particular, sixth form students should:

- register for all timetabled lessons/form periods;
- sign out at sixth form reception when leaving the campus and then, if necessary, sign back in.

Fixed Penalty Procedures

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act gives powers to the Local Education Authority (LEA) and other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer are considered capable of, but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance.

From September 2017, Carlton le Willows Academy operates a Fixed Penalty Fine Notice in respect of unauthorised school absences, in close co-operation with the Local Authority.

Penalty Notices may be used in a range of circumstances where Unauthorised Absences occur, such as:

- Unauthorised holiday absence during term time.
- Where a holiday is suspected by the school and parents/carers have failed to provide medical evidence to the contrary.
- Unnecessary parental condoned absence.
- Continued persistent absence without supporting medical evidence.
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the registers have closed)

In respect of unauthorised holidays in term time, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be requested if a student has missed a minimum of three school days (six sessions) during the previous six school weeks.

For other unauthorised absences a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued for absences of more than three school days (six sessions) over a six week period. (Please note the unauthorised absences do not have to run consecutively and can be on any day or session in a 6 week period).

The Academy will not take such action lightly and would rather work with parents/carers to improve attendance without having to resort to enforcement action. Attendance is so important however, that the Academy will seek enforcement from the Local Authority if we have not secured an improvement in a student's attendance.

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued by post to home. Parents/carers will be notified if the Academy applies a Penalty Notice. The costs associated with a Penalty Notice are as follows:

- £120 per child, per parent, reducing to £60 per child, per parents if paid within 21 days.

Specific roles and responsibilities

The class teacher

- Follow the general procedure for class attendance and liaise with the attendance team with any concerns.
- Monitor class attendance, reporting immediate concerns (i.e. a pupil missing from class who was in the preceding lesson or now in class, but was missing in preceding lesson) to the attendance team and student support and discussing longer term concerns with the head of department.
- Encourage good attendance through stimulating lessons and the use of rewards.
- Discourage truancy and lateness through use of the consequences.
- Prepare learning materials to support the return of pupils as required.

The head of department

- Set high expectations for pupils' attendance/punctuality.
- Discuss attendance/punctuality at department meetings.
- Ensure suitable resources are available for absent/excluded pupils.
- Induct supply/temporary staff on use of the general procedure for class attendance.
- Use data to inform target setting and interventions.
- Liaise with relevant staff and parents over attendance issues.

The tutor

- Follow the general procedure for class attendance and liaise with the attendance team with any concerns.
- Welcome and support students returning from absence.
- Liaise with relevant staff and parents over attendance issues.
- Support persistent absentees in improving their attendance.
- Encourage good attendance through stimulating lessons and the use of rewards.
- Discourage truancy and lateness through use of the consequences.

The house leader

- Set high expectations for pupils' attendance/punctuality.
- Discuss attendance/punctuality at tutor meetings.
- Induct supply/temporary staff on use of the general procedure for class attendance.
- Liaise with relevant staff and parents over attendance issues.

- Use data to inform target setting and interventions.
- Liaise with heads of department over support arrangements for pupils.
- Promote a positive ethos across the tutor team and house group through use of attendance rewards.
- Liaise with the attendance officer in relation to attendance, to target those students in need of additional support.

Attendance assistant

- Work in conjunction with the attendance officer to improve attendance at the Academy.
- Amend entries with up to date information to ensure accuracy of registers.
- Cause visits to teachers who may have entered incorrect or confusing marks.
- Contact teachers, who have failed to take their register.
- Contact home by text or telephone on the first day of a child's absence.
- Log/bring any concerns regarding the use of the general procedure for class attendance to the attention of the attendance officer.
- Accompany attendance officer in conducting home visits.
- At the direction of the attendance officer liaise between home and school regarding general attendance queries.
- Be responsible for the initiation of letters to parents regarding any unexplained absences.

Student advisers

- Where necessary, amend entries with up to date information to ensure accuracy of registers.
- Liaise with the attendance team regarding unknown absences reported by teachers. Give appropriate advice to teachers where necessary.
- Support house leaders in the collation of work for absent/excluded pupils.

The attendance officer

- Liaise between home and school in relation to general attendance queries.
- Work with families to improve their children's attendance, including vulnerable pupils in partner primary schools.
- Liaise with Academy staff and external agencies on improving pupil attendance.
- Analyse data on attendance and intervene with pupils who are developing a pattern of absence.
- Refer pupils who have been continuously absent without authorisation from school for 10 days for Family Service support. Refer pupils to Family Service where required.
- Promote a positive ethos across house group through use of attendance rewards.
- Feed back to school leadership regarding attendance.
- Prepare reports for the Headteacher and governors as necessary.
- Maintain appropriate records and prepare reports as necessary.
- Produce weekly and termly attendance reports for tutors/house leaders.
- Produce data to monitor attendance.
- Early intervention work with year 6 parents whose child has poor attendance.
- To devise and implement strategies to achieve and maintain excellent levels of attendance whilst eliminating unknown absences.
- To monitor whole school attendance data and advise key staff on trends, concerns and referrals.
- Where possible conduct late gate checks.
- Ensure attendance has a high profile in the Academy through use of TV screens and attendance graphs.

- Promote the use of multi-agency work to target the root problems identified by persistent absentees.
- Conduct home visits in line with policy.
- Conduct home visits on the first day of any unexplained absence for students deemed to be vulnerable.
- Maintain close links with local police, Family Service and Children's Social Care.
- Liaise closely with student advisers who provide one to one support to students with attendance concerns.
- Refer to student advisers appropriate students who have a poor attendance history and specific additional needs for ongoing one to one support.
- Take responsibility for the authorisation of holiday absence requests.
- Liaise with house leaders termly regarding attendance concerns relating to their students.
- Liaise closely with the deputy head for inclusion and SEN department regarding vulnerable students.
- Work with the Local Authority on the monitoring and application of Fixed Penalty Notices

The senior leader responsible for attendance

- Promote positive school ethos in relation to attendance through the development and operation of agreed policies, practices and processes.
- Coordinate strategies and plans for improving attendance.
- Ensure that roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance are communicated and understood.
- Ensure staff consistently apply strategies aimed at improving pupil attendance.