



CASTILION PRIMARY SCHOOL

Engage, Enthuse, Empower



Reviewed	Agreed by Staff	Review Date	Committee responsible for review
September 2020	September 2020	When necessary	Learning and Achievement

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The importance of school attendance and monitoring

Absence from school undoubtedly has a detrimental effect on a pupil's progress and attainment. Therefore the School needs to monitor and support pupils to maintain regular attendance if all are to achieve their full potential.

The purpose of this document is to outline roles, responsibilities and procedures for dealing with attendance at Castilion.

Encouraging regular attendance and punctuality

A welcoming and positive school is the most important factor for achieving successful attendance. However, non-attendance is a complex issue, caused by a range of interrelated factors, many of which are outside of the School's control, e.g. home, family and environment.

Castilion will encourage good attendance and punctuality by:

Ensuring children feel their presence in school is important and that they will be missed - if they are absent, their absence will be followed up;

- setting high expectations for all pupils, regardless of ability or background;
- dealing with all forms of bullying;
- identifying and supporting children with SEN at an early stage;
- identifying and supporting children and their parents/carers if attendance becomes a concern;
- discouraging families from taking annual holidays during term time;
- involving parents/carers in the life of the school;
- giving parents/carers clear information and guidance about attendance and related procedures, (including reminders periodically);
- recognising and rewarding excellent attendance, together with behaviour and achievement.

In cases where the Head Teacher decides a child cannot attend school (for a short period of time) for example, due to serious illness, injury or exclusion, the School will provide school work suitable to be done at home.

Monitoring attendance (and punctuality)

Castilion uses paper registers, which are then converted to electronic data by the office staff at the end of each week. Paper registers must therefore be kept up-to-date and completed accurately. The paper registers are also kept as a record, and may include more detailed explanations for absence provided by parents/carers.

Computer software is used by the Safeguarding Coordinator to analyse attendance records weekly and to produce reports as required.

Pupil registers

The School will hold an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on both registers.

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the School, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the School, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

The local authority should be notified in advance of the deletion, when the School becomes aware that the deletion will be made.

Registration periods

All children in each class will be registered by the teacher at the start of every morning and afternoon session. The register for the morning session will close at 9.30am.

Parents/carers are asked to inform the school by 9.30am on the first day of any absence due to illness (or other unforeseeable circumstances). Where an absence during school hours is expected, e.g. to attend a medical or dental appointment (other than emergencies), due to religious observance, etc., parents/carers are asked to inform the School in advance.

The School may require parents/carers to provide evidence of medical appointments, in the form of a hospital letter or appointment card, to authorise an absence for that reason during school hours. Parents/carers should be expected to make reasonable efforts to book appointments outside of school hours.

Marking the register

If a child is present at the time the register is called, the teacher must mark them as present for that session, using a black pen to mark the appropriate symbol (/) am or (\) pm.

If a child is not present when the register is called, the teacher must mark them as absent for that session using a red pen to mark the appropriate symbol (O).

The teacher must then count the number of children present and record the total, to check the register is accurate.

Dealing with lateness

If the child arrives before the register has closed, the child's late attendance must be marked by inserting the appropriate symbol (L) inside the absence mark (O). This entry may be completed by office staff, if the child reports to the School Office. The time of arrival should be noted at the bottom of the register, with the child's name and the date.

If a child arrives after the register has closed, the child's attendance must be marked by inserting the appropriate symbol (U) inside the absence mark (O). If a reason is provided by the parent at the time of arrival, this should be noted at the bottom of the register, with the child's name and the date.

Authorising absences

If a child's parent/carer has informed the School of the reason for an absence in writing in advance, or following the absence, the appropriate symbol should be inserted inside the absence mark (O). Please refer to SIMS for appropriate symbols. Ant notes or letters must be kept at the back the back of the register in an orderly manner.

If a child's parent/carer communicates the reason for an absence in person or by telephone, an Absence Report Form must be completed by the relevant member of staff, including the stated reason for absence, likely return (if known) and any evidence provided. A copy of appointment letters, etc. should be made at the School Office. Forms should be attached initially to the current paper Register and then kept at the back of the register in an orderly manner.

If a teacher is uncertain as to whether an absence should be authorised or not, or is concerned that the reason provided by the parent/carer is unsatisfactory or suspicious, he or she must refer the matter to the Safeguarding Coordinator (using Form C1), who will make a decision to authorise the absence (or not authorise it) and/or contact the parent/carer if clarification is needed.

Exceptional leave in term time

The Department of Education has from the 1st September 2013 announced that parents have no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances by completing an application for leave of absence form, which can be obtained from the school office. The Head Teacher will decide if it warrants exceptional circumstance. In all cases, the child(ren)'s attendance will be taken into account when making a decision. Parents will be fined by means of Penalty Notices or Prosecutions in the Magistrates Courts by the Local Authority for taking their child on unauthorised leave during term time without consent from the school.

In the event that a family have sought leave for exceptional circumstances, the school must be given evidence of the event that the family has sought leave for. If requested, evidence must also be provided of any delayed flights which affect outgoing and return dates. Evidence is an essential requirement if the leave is to be granted by the Headteacher.

Parents should apply for exceptional leave well in advance of the intended leave period. The school will not be liable for any costs incurred by the family if leave isn't granted.

Unauthorised absences

If a parent/carer does not provide the School with a satisfactory reason for a child's absence, this will be regarded as unauthorised. However, the class teacher should follow up any unexplained absence. If the class teacher's efforts are unsuccessful, or the reason provided is unsatisfactory, the matter should be referred to the Safeguarding Coordinator (using Form C1).

If necessary, the Safeguarding Coordinator will contact the parent/carer in writing, to inform them that the absence has not been authorised and request that a reason be provided. The letter will also invite the parent/carer to make an appointment to discuss the reason for absence in person, if they should wish to.

If the parent/carer does not respond to the first letter, a second letter will be sent as a further reminder. If no reason is provided, this will be regarded by the School as of concern.

Concerns about attendance and punctuality

Frequent lateness and repeated absence, with or without satisfactory explanation, will also be regarded by the School as of concern. Children at Risk of Missing Education The School must inform the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for more than 10 days.

If children are known to be particularly vulnerable, including Looked-After-Children and those subject to a Child Protection Plan, the Safeguarding Coordinator must report any unexplained absence of more than two days to Social Services.

The School must inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition that prevents them from attending school; or
- Have been permanently excluded.

Resolving school attendance problems

Attendance problems are often a symptom of some underlying cause. The school should investigate whether there are any school and/or home factors which are affecting a child's attendance.

While the parent/carer is primarily responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, where attendance problems occur, the key to successfully resolving these problems is engaging the child through collaborative working between the parent/carer, school and Local Education Authority. In all cases of non-attendance, it is essential that intervention is made as early as possible.

Thresholds for intervention

Each pupil will be considered on an individual basis. However, the threshold for intervention by the Safeguarding Coordinator will usually be if a child's attendance or punctuality falls below 95%, or a child is absent for more than three days (block absence) without a satisfactory explanation being provided by their parent/carer.

Intervention

Where a child's persistent lateness and/or non-attendance becomes of concern to the child's class teacher, and/or the Safeguarding Coordinator, the Safeguarding Coordinator will contact the child's parent/carer in writing, to inform them of the School's concerns and ask them to make an appointment to meet him or her to discuss the concerns and seek ways to address these. The matter will be treated confidentially.

If the parent/carer does not respond to this letter, a telephone call will be made to the contact number provided and/or a second letter will be sent. If the parent/carer does not respond to the second letter or telephone call, the Head Teacher will contact the parent/carer in writing. If the parent/carer does not respond to this third letter, the Safeguarding Coordinator will make a formal referral to the Educational Welfare Service (EWS), using the Confidential Attendance Referral form.

If the parent/carer meets with the Safeguarding Coordinator, the child's attendance record will be reviewed with their parent/carer, the reasons for absence or lateness discussed and ways to improve attendance and/or punctuality identified. The Safeguarding Coordinator will keep a confidential record of the meeting for future reference.

If the child's attendance and/or punctuality improve significantly, and this improvement is sustained, no further action will usually be necessary. However, where improvement is not significant and/or sustained, the Safeguarding Coordinator will usually need to make a formal referral to the EWS, and will inform the parent/carer of the need to do so.

If it is deemed necessary, the Safeguarding Coordinator may also seek to use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in order to identify the needs of the child and other workers who can best provide support to the child or family. More information about use of the CAF can be found in the School's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

If child abuse or neglect is suspected, the School's Child Protection Policy & Procedures must be followed.

Reporting attendance

Individual attendance will be reported to the child and their parent/carer on their End of Year Report. This will record the total number of sessions attended as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions. A breakdown of authorised and unauthorised absences will also be reported.

Overall attendance will be reported to the DfE termly via the Census data, broken down into authorised and unauthorised absences, as required.

Rewarding attendance

100% attendance will be recognised and rewarded by certificates to be awarded by the Head Teacher in whole school assemblies held at the end of each Term, and/or at the end of the academic year. These certificates complement those awarded for excellence in work and behaviour.

100% attendance and punctuality each week may be rewarded by the class teacher using individual and/or class rewards - CBEs in accordance with the Schools' Behaviour for Learning Policy.

Attendance and punctuality of each will be reported on a class basis at the end of each month in whole school assemblies and class(es) with the highest attendance/punctuality rewarded.

Monitoring and review

The School's governing body must approve this Policy and monitor and review its effectiveness, with the guidance of the Headteacher and the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

The Governing body reviews this policy when necessary. The governors may however review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Signed: Head Teacher

Date:

Signed: Chair of Governors

Date: