

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: Full Governing Board – 4th December 2023

Next renewal date: Term 1 2024

Attendance Policy

Calton Primary and Playgroup

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance.....	2
3. Roles and responsibilities.....	3
4. Recording attendance.....	5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	8
8. Monitoring arrangements	9
9. Links with other policies	9
Appendix 1: attendance codes.....	9

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance. **The government expects 100% attendance. At Calton, we define good attendance as 96% or above. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.**
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Full Governing Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.

3.2 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated leader responsible for attendance is Mr Holton (**Inclusion Lead**) and can be contacted via the school number.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analyzing attendance data (see section 7)

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Advising the headteacher/inclusion leader (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Short and can be contacted via the school number or attendance@caltonprimary.co.uk.

3.5 Class teachers

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

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the inclusion leader in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.15am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register 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.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by **8.45am** on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at **8.45am** and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken after the lunch break has ended.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff, leaving a message on the school voicemail **or emailing** attendance@caltonprimary.co.uk (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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 your child has been sick or has diarrhoea and you believe it is due to illness, please observe Calton Primary's 48hr rule: your child must remain at home until 48hrs after the last time that they were sick/had diarrhoea. If you believe that your child was sick as a one-off event (something they ate, for example), then they may return to school. School will contact you if the symptoms continue so that you may collect your child.

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

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

- 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 language for a parent/carer
- Family Holidays or days out

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

To request an absence, please complete an absence request form, available on the school's website.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Continued incidences of lateness will result in a meeting being requested by the inclusion leader to discuss barriers to getting your child in school on time. Where a child has arrived after the register has closed (9.15am) 10 or more times in a ten-week period legal sanction may be explored which could result in a fixed term penalty notice (see section 5.2).

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts after 2 days, the school may conduct a home visit or contact other relevant agencies such as Social Services or the Police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the Local Authority (Gloucestershire County Council)

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels in writing at the end of every second term (three times a year). If parents wish to know more

frequently, current attendance is available on eschools, or they may contact the inclusion leader directly.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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 front line workers e.g. police, fire service, health. 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 term time dates.
- 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)

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice 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 or withdraw the notice.

6. 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 inclusion leader will send weekly statistics to class teachers regarding their class's attendance so far for the year.

Good attendance will win points for the child's space team. Attendance will be a matter for constructive discussion in classrooms. All children who have attended school for 100% in a week will be entered into a draw to win a drink and cookies with the Head Teacher/Inclusion Lead.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis and on a weekly basis with the inclusion leader, supported fortnightly by the Head Teacher.

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.

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

7.1 Monitoring attendance

Calton Primary and Calton Playgroup will;

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

Calton Primary and Calton Playgroup will;

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

Calton Primary and Calton Playgroup will;

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

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 7 sessions absence.

At the end of term 2 = at least 14 sessions absence.

At the end of term 3 = at least 20 sessions absence.

At the end of term 4 = at least 25 sessions absence.

At the end of term 5 = at least 31 sessions absence.

At the end of term 6 = at least 38 sessions absence.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Write a My Plan with attendance targets where necessary
- Engage with the Local Authority where attendance does not improve and ensure that parents/carers are aware that legal proceedings may be forthcoming

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the inclusion leader. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour 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
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
---	------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------