

Causeway Green Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Governors approved date:

Review date: September 2025

Signed: 

Chair of Governors Dec '22

Rationale

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

It is the belief of the staff and Governors at Causeway Green Primary school that there must be a partnership between School Staff/Teachers, Governors, the Local Authority and Parents to achieve good attendance. The partnership is circular by nature and has at the centre of it the child.

'School Attendance is Everyone's business'

Good attendance at school will ensure that each child gains equal opportunities and access to the curriculum provided.

Aims and Objectives

- To create an environment that encourages and promotes regular attendance in school
- 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.
- To work with children, parents and outside agencies to create such an environment.
- To adopt clear procedures which are understood by everyone involved in maintaining good attendance at Causeway Green.
- To reward good or improving attendance through competitions, certificates and events.

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.

Target

We will use the aims listed above to raise our attendance levels to meet or exceed government criteria.

Roles and Responsibilities

The headteacher is the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and can be contacted via [**contact.us@causewaygreen.sandwell.sch.uk**](mailto:contact.us@causewaygreen.sandwell.sch.uk)

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
- 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
- Working with children, parents, governors, staff and the community to encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality, ensuring that it has a high profile in the school
- Ensuring that all legal regulations related to attendance are carried out.
- Maintaining records of attendance and punctuality to enable data to be collected and used to:
 - Assist in planning effective responses to identify concerns.
 - Complete returns for LA and DFE.

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- 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 senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/acting headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Checking that registration is correct.
- Noting any concerns and relaying them to the Headteacher, including information from absence and punctuality reports.
- Producing attendance reports as required by the Headteacher.
- Operating the first response system in agreement with the school policy.
- Checking registers daily to identify pupils who are absent for the first time in a particular week.

- Checking all messages from the answer machine, Weduc and from staff, to identify the need for making contact with parents.
- Contacting parents/carers to establish the reason for absence.
- Recording reasons for absence.
- Attending a weekly meeting with the Headteacher to go through absences throughout the school.
- Keeping an overview of attendance and punctuality throughout the school.
- Addressing any concerns expressed to them by the class teacher about a pupil's absence from school.
- Following the set procedure of actions to take, when a concern with attendance or punctuality has been identified.
- Making home visits when required.
- Making referrals to the **Sandwell Attendance Support Service** where necessary for parents whose children persist in having unauthorised absences.
- Making referrals to the **Sandwell Attendance Support Service** for parents who take unauthorised Leave of Absence from school, for a period of 10 sessions or more.
- Making **Attendance Support Request** referrals to the **SASS** for non-statutory interventions around pupil absence or home/school issues prior to any Legal Intervention Referral OR when the whereabouts of the child is unknown.
- Liaising with the Safeguarding Team about any pupils who are continually absent or late, to discuss offering wider support from external agencies if necessary.
- Liaising with Safeguarding Team on a daily basis about absences for that day.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and discuss with Headteacher.

When attendance becomes a concern the attendance officer will:

- Send out letters each term to the parents of all pupils who are at risk of becoming a **persistent absentee**, when their attendance has fallen below 92%. This letter notifies parents of the percentage and also includes a copy of their child's attendance certificate. Parents will be advised that their child's attendance will continue to be monitored and if no improvement is made they will be asked into school for a meeting with the Headteacher and Attendance Officer. At this point parents may be asked to provide medical evidence for further absences so that school can consider authorising them.
- Children whose overall attendance is below 90% will become targeted identified children. A pupil becomes a '**persistent absentee**' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Parents will be informed and invited into school for a meeting with the Attendance Officer and the Headteacher. An action plan will be drawn up to improve the child's attendance.
- In cases where children are often absent because of illness, the Headteacher will seek permission to involve the School Nurse.
- All records will be kept by the Attendance Officer in an absence file.
- Regular meetings between the Attendance Officer and the Headteacher will identify:
 1. Improvements in overall attendance.
 2. Improvements in identified children's attendance.
 3. Continuing concerns.
 4. New concerns.

Persistent lateness

The attendance officer will:

- Keep a record of pupils who are late and the reasons.
- Send letters of pupils who have been late 4 or more times in a half term.
- If the concern persists, parents will be invited into school to discuss the situation and devise an action plan to address the problem.

When a pupil is absent from school the Attendance Officer will do the following:

- On the first day of absence, if no reason has been given, then a First Response telephone call will be made to the parent/carer to find out why the child is not in school.
- If no contact is made on the first day of absence, the Attendance Officer will continue with attempted phone calls, to establish the reason for absence.
- If the pupil is still absent on the third day, with no contact from parents then the Attendance Officer and a member of the Safeguarding Team will aim to do a home visit.
- The Attendance Officer and a member of the Safeguarding Team will aim to do home visits to absent pupils, if no reason has been given for them not being in school, or there are any other concerns regarding the absence.
- If a pupil continues to be absent with no valid reason given, and all attempts to contact the parents have failed, then an Attendance Support Request referral will be made to the School Attendance Support Service.

Attendance Support Requests are provided to support schools with non-statutory interventions around pupil absence or home/school issues prior to any Legal Intervention Referral OR when the whereabouts of the child is unknown.

Follow up absence

The Attendance Officer 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.

The attendance officer is Jayne Walters and can be contacted via contact.us@causewaygreen.sandwell.sch.uk or 0121 559 2068

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, marking pupils as either present or absent, and submitting this information via SIMS at registration times.

- Make the pupils aware of the formal importance of the registration process within school.
- Promote and acknowledge good attendance of pupils within their class.
- Send out letters (provided by the Attendance Officer) to parents who fail to contact the school to explain absence.

School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

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

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- 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

Absence – Parent/Carers responsibilities

When a pupil is absent from school, it is the parent/carers responsibility to do the following:

- **Either:** First thing in the morning on the first day of absence, telephone the school and either speak to a member of the office staff, or telephone the absence line which is **option 1** after dialling the main school phone number, and either leave a message on the answer machine with the reason for the absence, or speak to the Attendance Officer. **The school telephone number is: 0121 559 2068**
- Or: leave an absence message on Weduc.
- If the pupil is still absent after day 3, then medical evidence will be asked for so that the absence can be considered for approval. This can be in the form of either, a doctor's note, a copy of a prescription or an appointment card. Medicine bottles with a date and the child's name on can also be shown as medical evidence. Any of the above can be handed in at the school office for the attention of the Attendance Officer.
- Unauthorised absences may be referred to the local authority and could result in a penalty notice being issued to the parents.
- If a pupil's attendance is between 90% and 92% then they are at risk of becoming **PA** (persistent absentee) which is a serious attendance issue. If their overall attendance for the year has fallen below 92%, then medical evidence may be required for all future absences, until the percentage exceeds 92%. Parents/carers are informed if their child's attendance falls into this category. This action is taken to try to prevent children falling into the PA category.
- If a pupils' attendance falls below 90% then they fall into the **PA** category (persistent absentee). Parent/carers will be called into school for an attendance meeting with the Headteacher and the Attendance Officer.
- If school have ongoing concerns about a pupil's attendance, and all appropriate steps have been taken to resolve the issue with no improvement made, then a referral to the **Sandwell Attendance Support Service** will be considered.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

Procedure for the registration of pupils

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this 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:

- For pupils of compulsory school age - 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 9.00am each school day.

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 soon as practically possible by doing one of the following:

- **Either:** First thing in the morning on the first day of absence, telephone the school and either speak to a member of the office staff, or telephone the absence line which is **option 1** after dialing the main school phone number, and either leave a message on the answer machine with the reason for the absence, or speak to the Attendance Officer. **The school telephone number is: 0121 559 2068**
- Or:** leave an absence message on Weduc.

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 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.

Attendance is recorded via SIMS E. Reg by the class teacher every morning and afternoon. Pupils are recorded as late (with an L code) if they arrive up to 15 minutes after the start of registration. After 15 minutes it is recorded as an unauthorised absence (U code) if no valid reason is given.

All late arrivals will be recorded to identify any patterns.

Marking the pupils' attendance using E. Reg

Teachers responsible for each class at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions are required to mark each pupil on the E. Reg either present (/) or absent (N) in accordance with the instructions.

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, a late (L) mark will be applied by the Attendance Officer. The pupil will then automatically be recorded as present but late on the computer.

School begins between 8:45am – 9.00am and finishes at 3:30pm Monday to Thursday and 2:15pm on a Friday.

Registration Times

Morning session 9:00am – 9:05am

Afternoon session 1:00pm – 1:05pm

Daily Timetable

8:45 – 9:00am	Doors open
9:00am	Doors close and school starts
9:00am	Registration
9:00am – 12:00pm	Morning session
10:40am – 10:55am	Morning Break (KS1)
10:30am – 10:45am	Morning Break (KS2)
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch Break (KS1 & 2)
1:00pm – 3:25pm	Afternoon session (KS1)
2.15pm	Finish on a Friday
1:00pm – 3:30pm	Afternoon session (KS2)
Morning	Friday Merits in class for Key Stage 1 & 2
2:10pm – 2:20pm	Afternoon Break for Key Stage 1
3:25pm	Finish Monday to Thursday for KS1
3:30pm	Finish Monday to Thursday for KS2

Nursery Times

8:45am – 11:45am	Morning sessions
12:30pm – 3:30pm	Afternoon sessions

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, by way of sending out individual Registration Certificates with school reports twice a year, and any attendance issues discussed at twice yearly parents' evenings.

Termly letters sent out to the parents of pupils when their attendance has fallen below 92%.

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 something which is unavoidable and cannot take place during school holidays. **We do not authorise parental requests for holidays during term time.**

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 **4 weeks** before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or the Attendance Officer. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

*If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. (*DfE Working together to improve school attendance sept 2022)*

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- 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. Parents should inform the school in advance of such occasions by completing a Leave of Absence form, which can be obtained from the school office.
- Compassionate leave of absence will be considered when discussed with the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher.
- 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
- Shopping trips, haircuts etc. will not be taken as reasons for authorised absence.

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.

Strategies for promoting attendance

Pupils are regularly rewarded for good **or** improved attendance.

Weekly attendance assemblies are held to discuss the importance of regular school attendance and to identify the Best Class Attendance for that week.

At the end of term, the class who had the best attendance throughout the term gets a reward to share as a group. They can decide their reward, usually a film afternoon with popcorn or something similar.

Termly Attendance assemblies are held to celebrate any pupils who have got 100% attendance for that term.

At the end of the school year a prize draw is held for all of the pupils who have had 100% attendance for the whole year, with the chance to win a bike (or similar) for KS2 and a scooter (or similar) for KS1.

Rewards given regularly throughout the year for any target pupils who make a remarkable improvement with their attendance.

School displays show the names of pupils with 100% attendance.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data 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.

Analysing attendance

The school 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

Using data to improve attendance

The school 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

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 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

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3 years by the attendance officer and headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Children Missing Education

At Causeway Green we are aware that children missing education may be a safeguarding issue and so the Attendance Officer and Safeguarding Team will work closely to identify any issues and children who may be at risk of harm.

Our school has appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. We will always follow up with parents/carers, when pupils are absent from school. To support this, we will always request at least two up to date contact numbers. If we are unable to contact parents or carers and there are concerns around their absence a home visit will be carried out by the Attendance Officer and a member of the safeguarding team. If we are still unable to contact parents or carers and have cause for concern, then we may request a safe and well check to be carried out by the police.

Other Information

A registration printout can be produced for any pupil for any period of time. This can be used to illustrate punctuality and absence patterns. This printout can be used by teachers, in June of every academic year, in order to comment on attendance in pupil school reports.

It is possible to produce reports using the system that will identify different types of absence in order for the school to focus on any particular area of weakness. For example, holidays, medical appointments etc. These reports will be produced and analysed by the Attendance Officer.

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

