

Cavendish Close Infant and Nursery School

Attendance Policy – 2020 - 2021

This policy was written by Naila Asghar

We recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are key to raising achievement.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our school vision of wanting our children to achieve our **STAR Expectations** and succeed in life within an ever-changing world.

We want our children to be ready for the next stage of their education personally and academically. Good attendance and punctuality plays a huge role in this.

When our children move on from us, we want them to be:

C	Curious, Determined, Brave and Flexible Learners
C	Confident Communicators, Readers, Writers and Mathematicians
I	Independent and Able to Make Safe, Healthy and Happy Choices
S	Sociable, Respectful, Resilient, Kind and Ambitious

We seek to work in partnership with our parents and carers to ensure the best possible start for each child and regular attendance and punctuality are an essential part of this partnership.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is important they attend school regularly and on time. We expect our children to commit to being Attendance HEROs (**Here Every day, Ready On time**):

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any child's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Aims and Objectives

At Cavendish Close Infant and Nursery School, we aim to raise achievement through promoting attendance and punctuality levels of 96% and above. Our aims are:

- to assist parents, carers and children through clear procedures and expectations for staff, parents, carers and children regarding attendance and punctuality.
- to safeguard vulnerable children through clear measures for dealing with absence and lateness
- to foster a high expectation of attendance in school on a regular basis
- to raise family awareness of the importance of a child's regular attendance at school
- to inform parents/carers of their child's attendance levels at school

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance of a child where he or she is a registered pupil. Failure to discharge this duty may result in the Local Authority prosecuting the parents and each parent may be fined.

In school the register is taken twice a day, each day consists of two sessions. The morning session starts at 8.55 a.m. and the afternoon session starts at 1.15 p.m. Each child is marked A (present) or O (absent). If a child is marked absent, a code indicating the reason for the absence is recorded against the child's name.

The Attendance Leader and Attendance Champion have responsibility for deciding if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. School staff do not need to accept a parental explanation for a child's absence, whether written, telephoned or given in person, if they doubt the explanation.

Absences should be reported to the school office before 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence and each day thereafter. This can be done by telephone message, verbal, email or by letter. If this is not done, school will make a call home to seek an explanation for the absence.

Attendance at school is monitored on a regular basis by the Attendance Team. Should a child's attendance fall below 95% parents/carers will be informed to make them aware. Should attendance fall below 90% parents/carers will be contacted to discuss their child's attendance. Attendance below 90% is classed as 'Persistent Absenteeism' and these children are discussed on a regular basis with the Education Welfare Officer.

If poor attendance continues, school will liaise further with the Education Welfare Officer, who may contact the parents/carers and /or arrange a joint meeting with parents/carers and school to try to resolve the problem by agreement. If ways of trying to improve the child's attendance fail, the Education Welfare Service may issue a Penalty Notice or use Court proceedings to prosecute parents/carers.

Authorised Absence or Lateness

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

Absence as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed after 9.15 am.
- Not attending at school for any reason.

An authorised absence as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments, which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

Unauthorised Absence

An unauthorised absence as:

- No satisfactory explanation has been given to explain the lateness or absence.
- There is reason to doubt the accuracy of the reasons given for the lateness or absence.
- Parent/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without an acceptable reason.
- Absences, which have not been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed with no acceptable reason.

Unsuccessful attempts to contact the home via telephone call, email or text messaging stating a phone call back will be recorded on CPOMS (The schools' software for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing and all pastoral needs). In the case of families deemed to be 'vulnerable', a door stop visit may take place. For all other families, should contact be unsuccessful, a door stop visit may take place from day two and onwards.

Door Stop Visit Procedure

Door stop visits allow schools to learn about the underlying reasons behind poor attendance. By opening a dialogue with parent/carers. The Educational Welfare Officer is able to offer this support when required.

Persistent absenteeism is defined as:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year.

Absence Procedure

Attendance and Lateness is tracked on a weekly basis by the Attendance Team.

Absence Procedure	
Initial Absence	First day calling – phone call if no contact has been made with school.
Stage 1	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of decline in attendance – monitoring Below 95% - Letter 1 - Attendance Team to send a letter home where attendance is expressing concerns – monitor. Attendance Team to use discretion as necessary.
Stage 2	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitoring Below 92% - Letter 2 - Attendance Team to send a letter home where there is no improvement after sending letter 1. Weekly well-being calls made. Monitor for 6 weeks.
Stage 3	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitoring Below 90% - CONTINUE TO DECLINE - Letter 3 - Arrangement of a formal meeting/telephone consultations Support families as necessary
Stage 4	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitoring CONTINUE TO DECLINE – Letter 4 - Referral to EWO.
Stage 5	Phone call to parents/carers - awareness of continuous decline in attendance – monitoring CONTINUE TO DECLINE - Letter 5 meeting with EWO

Late Procedure	
Stage 1	Late on 4 occasions – phone call made. Late on 8 occasions - initial concern letter 1 to monitor punctuality to be sent. (Monitor punctuality for 4 weeks)
Stage 2	Late on 9 occasions – phone call made. Late to school on 12 occasions – Letter 2
Stage 3	Late on 13 occasions – phone call made Late to school on 16 occasions – Letter 3 – formal meeting
Stage 4	Further decline, (90%, or below punctuality) will result in a referral to the Local Authority.

Safeguarding at Cavendish Close Infant and Nursery School

We believe in supporting the whole family; our first duty of care, however, is to the child. Where there is any doubt regarding the safety and wellbeing of a child, we will follow our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Our preferred option is an open and honest relationship with our parents or carers with good communication.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Illness - If a child has been sick **and the sickness is considered to be viral** they should stay at home for 48 hours to avoid passing the illness on to others. Parents are requested to inform school by phone or email by 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence and each day thereafter explaining the reason for the absence.

Recurring Illnesses - Through our attendance monitoring procedures, should we identify children with recurring periods of illness, we may request supporting medical evidence for our records. E.g., Appointment cards/letters, second part of prescriptions or prescribed medicines (including labels) can be shown. This in turn will allow us to authorise the absence.

Appointments – School should be given prior notification of medical appointments by email/phone call, verbal or a letter. Wherever possible, all appointments should be made outside of school time either before or after school or during the school holidays. Should an appointment be necessary during the school day, please provide an appointment card/letter/text notification confirming this.

Leave of Absence - From September 2013, Headteachers no longer have discretion when authorising leave during term time. Leave of absence can only be agreed during term time under the grounds of exceptional circumstances. Requests made for family holidays, family weddings or to see relatives abroad are not deemed to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The following examples may be considered exceptional circumstances:

- Significant family bereavement, i.e. Mother (step), Father (step) principal carer or sibling,
- Significant family illness to Mother (step), Father (step), sibling or principal carer.
- Involvement in court proceedings, either in the family courts or in criminal proceedings.

Any requests for leave of absence will be communicated via a phone call and a letter. (see appendix 6) All communication to be reported on CPOMS (The schools' software for monitoring safeguarding, wellbeing and all pastoral needs).

Registration

Children must attend school on time to be given a mark for that session.

- The doors open at 8.45 a.m. The children walk into class and are registered at 8.55 a.m.
- Children arriving after 9.00 a.m. will be marked late 'L'. (5 minutes)
- Children arriving at 9.15 a.m. or later will be marked as 'U' – Un-authorized late. This will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence**. (20 minutes)

Afternoon registration is at 1.15 p.m.

All children arriving late and missing registration must sign in at the School Office to comply with evacuation procedures in the event of fire or other emergency.

A child arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others.

Staff input attendance and punctuality on to the School's Information Management System (Integris), which calculates attendance marks. It is also a daily requirement that staff input attendance on the Fire register (the red laminated class register) daily. The Attendance Team is responsible for completing Reports that are generated from the system. These reports give the name of each child and the dates of the absence and non-attendance reasons.

A child's attendance record is monitored and any absence or continuous late arrival in school will be checked and actioned, this is the responsibility of the teacher. This may also involve the Education Welfare Service if school considers it necessary.

Persistent Absence

The Education Welfare Service is in place to support school with the monitoring of attendance and punctuality, to ensure that all children of compulsory school age are in school. Part of the role is to carry out official register checks and highlight any attendance concerns. Once a pupil's attendance falls below 90% the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) may make a home visit or require parents/carers to attend a meeting to discuss any concerns. Referrals may be made to other agencies for further support.

Penalty Notices

Leave of Absence during Term Time

We have adopted a zero tolerance with regards to holidays during term time; this is in line with Local Authority and Government guidelines.

Families, who take children out of school in term time for holidays, may be subject to a legal process undertaken by the Education Welfare Service of the Local Authority. The 2007 Regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion.

The following procedures will be followed in cases of unauthorised leave of absence:

- On return to school from a period of unauthorised absence, the Education Welfare Service is informed automatically and in line with Derby City Council procedures, a penalty notice is requested by the Headteacher for consideration by the Education Welfare Service, on behalf of Derby City Council.
- Parents/carers may receive a Penalty Notice issued by Derby City Council of £120 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. This is reduced to £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.
- If this amount is not paid by 28 days, the Local Authority will issue a summons for the parent/carer to appear in a Magistrates court.

Absence, lateness and term time holidays will be recorded in End of Year individual school reports.

Strategies for Monitoring Good Attendance

At Cavendish Close Infant and Nursery School, we will encourage punctuality and good attendance through:

- ✓ Class attendance is tracked weekly. A certificate and trophy is given to the class with the best attendance
- ✓ Weekly attendance is shared with all Teams and posters are displayed in classrooms to celebrate good attendance.
- ✓ Individual certificates are presented termly where excellent attendance (98% or above) has been achieved.

- ✓ Prizes are presented termly where full attendance (100%) has been gained.
- ✓ ALL children who achieve 98% - 100% attendance for the whole school year are rewarded with a certificate and a special attendance experience.
- ✓ The class with the best attendance for the half term is awarded with a non-uniform day during the first week back after half term.
- ✓ The Attendance Team will monitor attendance regularly. Any child with below 95% attendance will trigger concern and an action plan put in place.
- ✓ Children with attendance below 90% (Persistent Absenteeism) will be monitored and action will be taken.
- ✓ A member of the Attendance Team is outside on site daily to monitor attendance and punctuality.

Our school acknowledges the importance of high levels of attendance and punctuality. Together:

We are Attendance HEROs (Here Every day Ready On time).

Attendance Leader	Attendance Champion
Mrs N.Asgar	Mrs.J Leadbeater
Assistant Heatteacher	Learning Mentor/Safeguarding Champion
Policy written – April 2021	
To be reviewed – April 2022	