



Attendance Policy

Statement

At Castleward Spencer School, we believe that regular attendance is important to ensure the best possible outcomes for all our children. We support the view that every lesson counts and so encourage our children to attend every session possible.

Aim

- To raise attendance.
- To improve punctuality.
- To make attendance a priority for the whole school including governors, pupils, parents and staff.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

Parents' Responsibilities

Under section 7 of the 1966 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs that a child might have.

School's Responsibilities

It is the school's responsibility to regularly monitor attendance and to inform parents and governors of their findings.

Absence

- All absences should be reported by a parent/carer, either by phone, letter or visit to the school office.
- Reasons for a child's absence cannot be accepted from:
 - A neighbour
 - A sibling
 - A peer
 - The child themselves upon their return to school
- We operate a first day calling system. This means that if a child is reported as absent after the registers have closed in the morning, and the school has not been made aware by the parent/carer of the reason for absence, the school will contact the parent/carer to ascertain the reason for their child's absence.
- If the parent/carer is unable to be contacted by phone then a text message will be sent asking them to contact us as soon as possible.
- If the parent/carer does not respond to the text message a home visit will be made.

Acceptable Reasons for Absence

- Illness or injury.
- Hospital, doctor or dentist appointments which cannot be made out of school time.
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. sudden injury, serious illness or death of a close relative. (However, we will expect the parent to make suitable arrangements for their child to attend as soon as possible.)
- Educational reasons.



Unacceptable Reasons for Absence

- Treatment for head lice.
- Days off for shopping, haircuts or looking after younger siblings.
- Visiting friends and relatives, or days out.
- Holidays.
- Oversleeping.
- Parent attending an appointment and taking the child with them.

Absence due to Family Holiday

It is the school's policy not to authorise holidays during term time. If parents then chose to remove their children from the school for holidays these absences will be considered unauthorised. Parents/carers may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £120 if they take their child on holiday during term time without consent.

Unauthorised Absence

Where no reason for absence has been notified and we have been unable to contact a parent/carer to authorise a child's absence or received a letter upon the child's return, such absence will be treated as unauthorised. This will be entered as an "O" in the register and recorded as such in SIMS.

Persistent absence

- It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of the reasons for this via a phone call, e-mail or letter.
- If no contact has been made by the parent/carer, a member of staff will attempt to make contact to find out the reason for absence. If a valid reason is secured the absence is authorised.
- If the contact phone call has been unsuccessful in establishing a reason for absence, the school will post home/deliver an absence enquiry letter. This should be completed by the parents and returned to the school.
- Where a teacher is not satisfied with the reason given for a particular absence or period of persistent absence, the child's name will be given to the designated member of staff for monitoring absence.
- 94% - Letters of concern sent to parents and meeting to be held with attendance support.
- 92% - Second letter of concern sent to parents and a meeting to be held with member of SLT and attendance support.
- Below 90% - Attendance meeting with a member of the Governing body, the Principal and attendance support staff. Support put in place and need improvement within two weeks – if no improvement and if appropriate, involve NCC Persistent Absence to offer further support and advice. Referrals will be made to family services through completion of an Early Help Assessment Form. The Education Authority has a duty to become involved if they believe that a child is not getting the education required by law.
- For pupils who have less than 90% attendance, proof of medical appointments will be requested to authorise any further absence due to illness.
- Families who make significant improvements in attendance will receive letters of recognition due to supporting their child attendance every day.

Keeping the Attendance Register



The daily electronic attendance register is a legal document and as such must be completed twice daily; at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions by the staff member.

Late Attendance

Punctuality is of utmost importance. Parents and children arriving late will be requested to sign the punctuality register, noting down the reason for being late and any learning missed due to lateness. Children who arrive late will be provided with work to complete to ensure that any missed learning is completed prior to the start of the following school day.

Gates close at 8:55am.

A child will be deemed late ("L") if they arrive after 9.00am for the morning session or after 12:45pm for the afternoon session.

Registers close at 9:30am. Any child arriving after this time will be recorded as "U".

If a child is repeatedly late the parent/carer will receive a letter informing them of this. Significant lateness or a pattern of lateness will be reported to the Principal.

Role of the Class Teacher

- To complete the registers in full twice per day.
- To inform office if a reason is given for absence verbally in the classroom/keep any written notes in the register.
- To raise concerns with the Principal.

Role of the Principal

- To monitor attendance and punctuality weekly.
- To report back to the Governing Body in the termly report to Governors.
- To liaise with staff.
- To ensure referrals to targeted support have been made.
- To ensure warning letters are issued if attendance falls to 94% or below.
- To make families aware of their responsibilities.
- To enforce the message that holidays will not be authorised.

Role of the Attendance Lead / Office Administrator

- To undertake first day calling - contact those parents who do not inform the school of reasons of absence within first hour of the school day.
- To record reason given for absence in the absence register and log code in the official register.
- To pass information on to staff/raise concerns with staff or Principal.
- To record/monitor attendance electronically in SIMS.
- To send standard letters on to parents/carers.
- To record the arrival times of those who are late and the reason given.

Role of the Governing Body

- To monitor the school's authorised and unauthorised absences.



- To encourage a positive approach to attendance and punctuality.
- To support the school in raising awareness of the need for full attendance in order to achieve high standards for all pupils.

Role of Pupils and their Families

- To make sure that the child attends regularly and on time.
- To make sure that the child fully understands the importance of attending every day.
- To let the school know by 9:10am, the reason why their child is not attending.
- To inform the school well in advance of any future absence such as major family events/holidays.
- To take family holidays during school holidays.
- To make dental and medical appointments out of school hours.
- To work with the school if absence or lateness becomes a problem and work in conjunction with the school to put this right.
- To co-operate with the Education Welfare Officer if they become involved, in the best interest of the child, ensuring uninterrupted education.

Celebrating and Rewarding Punctuality and Attendance

- ✓ Children with excellent attendance make more progress and have a greater chance of meeting their true potential.
- ✓ Weekly attendance display in the school hall.
- ✓ Attendance celebrated in the school newsletter.



Appendix 1:

Register Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory School age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances