

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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1 Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2 Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2004 and 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2012 and 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3 School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school and be registered by 8.30 am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.40pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm



3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6), by contacting the school absence line 01737 378447

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents 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 will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Parents should notify the attendance officer via email (sreynolds@carringtonschool.org) or through a written note in the pupil's record book.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before 09:00 am for the morning session, or 01:40 p.m. for the afternoon session, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after 09:00 for the morning session, or 01:40 p.m. for the afternoon session, will be marked as absent for that session, using the appropriate code.

In the event of persistent lateness, the pupil will likely need to make up the lost learning time in line with the behaviour policy, and parents be asked to attend a meeting to discuss any issues with attendance and punctuality.

3.5 Following up absence

The school 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.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Parents are able to see a live account of pupil's attendance via the Go4Schools app. Attendance figures will also feature in both progress and full written reports.

4 Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.



4.2 Legal sanctions

a) Penalty Notices

The Inclusion Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

- Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
 - The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.
 - Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.
 - The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Inclusion Service will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.
With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.
 - Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. The amount payable is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.
- b) Parents can also be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court under section 444 Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure their child attends school regularly. "Regularly" means in accordance with the rules of the school – i.e. every day your child is expected to attend – Isle of Wight Council -v- Jon Platt (2017). On conviction, under Section 444 (1) the maximum sentence is a fine of £1,000 and under section 444 (1) (A) the maximum sentence is 3 months imprisonment.
- c) The Local Authority can also apply to the Family Court for an Education Supervision Order. Failure to comply with an Education Supervision Order may result in a referral to the Social Care team.



5 Strategies for promoting attendance

Carrington School is committed to providing high quality inclusive learning opportunities for all students. We believe that if students are to reach their full potential, then excellent attendance is crucial. In order to promote attendance we use the following strategies.

- Set and review targets at the beginning and end of each half term (Tutor).
- Certificates awarded to students with 100% attendance at the end of each term (HOY).
- Certificates awarded to students with 100% punctuality at the end of each term (HOY).
- Prize draw at the end of the year for students with 100% attendance and punctuality (AHT).
- Discuss tutor group attendance figures on a regular basis using the graphs produced via Go4Schools as an aid for discussion (Tutor).
- Ensure that students realise the consequences of poor attendance - effect on achievement, poor references, Attendance Panel and Inclusion Officer Involvement leading to possible prosecution (Tutor).
- Reward good attendance e.g. credits, individual and team rewards (Tutor and HOY).

6 Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2) and everyday thereafter until the pupil returns

If a pupil is absent on more than one occasion in a 6-week block, the attendance officer may write to request medical evidence for future absences and record absence as unauthorised unless supported by a medical professional

If a pupil has more than one unauthorised absence in a 6 week block the Head of Year will contact the parents via telephone to discuss the reasons for this. If there are unable to make contact a letter will be sent outlining our attendance expectations.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider making a referral to the Inclusion Officer from the Local Authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

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.

Attendance data is logged and stored on SIMS and Go4Schools and used for internal purposes to track the attendance of individual and groups of students. This information is monitored and evaluated to identify those children and families who may require additional support.



7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 Assistant Headteacher in charge of attendance will:

- Make decisions, about absence requests (referred by HOY) and respond to parent/carers' requests and inform the HOY/AHOY/form tutor of the outcome.
- Support form tutors, teaching staff, HOY and HSLW in promoting good attendance and punctuality and ensuring that poor attendance is acted upon.
- Oversee and monitor whole school attendance and punctuality, initiating whole school policies as required. This will be achieved by liaison with the SLT and other relevant teams.

7.4 Head of Year

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance
- Works with Inclusion Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.5 Teachers

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.6 Year Hubs

Student Services staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

7.7 Attendance Officer

Monitor and, where necessary, enter students' attendance marks into SIMS.

- Collect and log absence letters.
- Make contact with parents/carers on the first day of absence for all students where the reason for absence is unknown.
- Contact parents/carers should any student leave the site without permission.
- Inform parents, as necessary, of the need to complete a leave of absence request form prior to a planned absence.
- Compile all attendance data and information for relevant staff
- Work closely with the tutors, HOY, AHT and HSLW to monitor students who present concerns.
- Produce an annual report on whole-school attendance for the appropriate member of SLT at the end of the academic year for the previous 12 months.



8 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9 Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

