

## Caton St.Paul`s C of E Primary School

# Whole School Attendance Policy Procedural Framework 2016

This document forms part of Caton St.Paul`s C of E Primary School's Whole School Attendance Policy, and will be reviewed annually.

In drawing up this procedural framework, schools should ensure that there is a focus on the Change for Children agenda and the outcomes for children identified under Every Child Matters, and on duties arising from Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Children Act 2004.

### Linked Policies

Admissions  
Anti-Bullying  
Behaviour  
Child Protection and Safeguarding Children  
Equal Opportunities  
Racial Equality  
Special Educational Needs  
Health and Safety

### Current Status

Over the last 3 years the Number of Pupils on role has increased significantly each year. For the last 3 years the absence target has been set at 3% and below. This target has been consistently met each year. Summer 2016 overall absence was 2.42%. The % unauthorised absence remains low at 0.38%. Authorised absence has decreased over the last 3 years and remains below County and National averages. Persistent absence is currently zero. Despite low absence rates the School's focus continues to be reducing the number of families taking holidays during term time at short notice. Clear systems are in place to be proactive in addressing this issue.

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

Attendance at school is an integral part of improving outcomes for our children and their families. As such the following section outlines the main areas of responsibility for all parties involved in the development of our children:-

#### Parents

- Ensure children attend regularly, and punctually

- Contact school on 1<sup>st</sup> day of absence
- Contact school regularly during extended periods of absence Parental notes on return from absence
- Avoid holidays in term time wherever possible
- Holidays are permitted by school in term time (10 days maximum) but sufficient prior notice must be given by parents for authorising the request
- Are required to make early contact with school if they become aware of problems with attendance
- Should attend meetings if concerns are identified
- Engage in Attendance Parenting Contracts where appropriate
- Should support the school in agreed interventions/action plans, including or arising from the Common Assessment Framework process.

### Pupils

- Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school e.g. early bedtimes to allow punctual attendance
- Attend school/registration punctually
- Adhere to appropriate systems for late registration
- Speak to teacher/parents if issues arise which have an effect on school attendance.
- Cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by school or other agencies.

### School Staff

Overall responsibility lies with the Head Teacher (Mrs Karen Price), but school has identified a School Attendance Lead who is a member of the senior leadership team (Mrs Sally Glennon). The attendance lead will monitor absence daily, promote positive value for maximum attendance and ensure staff are promoting attendance throughout school. All members of staff are expected to contribute to promoting and raising attendance within the school.

The Headteacher (or Senior Leadership Team member with overall responsibility for attendance) will

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Ensure there are designated staff (including the School Administrator) with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance

## Designated Staff

- Pupils and parents are made aware of expectations regarding attendance matters through verbal dialogue on a daily/weekly basis as appropriate with individual staff, termly reminders on the School Newsletter and through HT intervention when required
- All staff mark attendance at morning and afternoon registration. School administrator checks registers and consults HT as appropriate for codes
- Only the HT is permitted to amend absence codes
- There is a first day contact system in place
  - Class teachers / teaching assistants contact home on first day if no information is received about the child's absence
  - Where members of staff are unable to leave class or a supply teacher is covering, the school administrator may contact home
  - Parents of a targeted group (e.g. CLA families, children under child protection order, children supported by CAF framework) will be contacted by the HT
- The Attendance Lead is responsible for monitoring and recording attendance of pupils who are receiving education elsewhere
- The HT reviews registers and identifies trends of absence
- The Assessment co-ordinator and HT collate whole school attendance data and analyses this information
- Information is shared with school staff/pupils/parents termly through newsletters and verbal discussion
- The Attendance Lead is responsible for reintegration programmes
- The HT is responsible for contacting parents re concerns. There are standard letters used by the HT (see attachments). Verbal contact will be made in the first instance and as appropriate
- Incremental steps for additional involvement by other staff if concerns remain unresolved follow the escalation procedure (Flowcharts 1 & 2)
- The HT is responsible for arranging meetings between parent/staff/external agencies
- The HT and/or Attendance Lead is responsible for communicating in school systems to other staff
- The HT is responsible for arranging/delivering training for all staff re in-school systems on attendance matters
- The School administrator is responsible for ensuring arrangements are in place re attendance matters when staff are absent
- All staff are responsible for promoting attendance with children and their families
- The HT is responsible for ensuring staff are aware of the school and individual pupil targets. All staff are responsible for ensuring these targets are met.

- The HT and/or Attendance Lead will liaise with appropriate agencies as required
- The HT ensures consistent referral of regular or unjustified absence to Children's Integrated Services
- The HT is responsible for making those referrals to Children's Integrated Services
- The HT is responsible for requesting Penalty Notices

### All Staff

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns
- Are aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- Are aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all pupils
- See pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff
- Are required to participate in training regarding school systems and procedures as appropriate

### Governors

- Governors adopt the policy and review annually
- Governors monitor the consistent implementation of the attendance policy across school.
- Agree statutory targets for attendance for the school
- Governors consider attendance as an agenda item annually
- The nominated Child Protection Governor has responsibility for attendance matters in liaison with the HT
- Governors may get involved with attendance panels and meetings as advised by the HT
- Governors discuss and analyse attendance data annually
  - Monitoring issues of equal opportunity
  - Measuring progress against attendance (and attainment targets)
  - For action planning
- The school impresses upon parents and pupils the strong link between attendance and educational attainment by means of Parent Evening discussion, on-going verbal discussion, HT newsletters and information letters
- Children are made aware of the importance of attendance through PHSE, SEAL and class discussion. Rewards are given for excellent attendance

## Procedures

### Registration

All staff with responsibility for registration are familiar with of the contents of:

- Absence and Attendance Codes (DCSF May 2008)
- Keeping Pupil Registers – Guidance on applying the Pupil Registration Regulations (DCSF – June 2008)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

The school should also set out here:

- The registration period is **8.55am – 9.00am** and **1.15pm – 1.20pm**
- The formal close of registration for morning session is **9.05am** and afternoon session is **1.25pm**
- **Late registration arrangements – parents are required to sign in the late book at the front entrance after 9.05am and 1.25pm**
- Signing in/out arrangements – a record is kept at the front entrance for all movement of children in and out and entrance/exit of visitors
- Messages from parents by telephone are recorded by the School administrator/ member of staff in the office, and then passed on immediately to class teachers
- Messages from parents and letters confirming absence from school are kept in the child's confidential file
- Only the HT is authorised to amend absence codes
- All teachers are responsible for monitoring consistency of marking in respect of pupils temporarily in support units or attending other in-school activities e.g. music tuition when registration is taken
- HT and School Administrator are responsible for checking consistency of use of symbols, and acceptable reasons for absence across the whole school. Staff are responsible for bringing uncertain absence concerns to the attention of the HT
- Following 1<sup>st</sup> day contact all staff are responsible for monitoring longer periods of absence. Periods of longer than 1 week should be brought to the attention of the HT
- Decisions on when to no longer authorise absence will take into account family circumstances, previous absence, impact on learning and support strategies that are or could be put into place

### Holidays in Term Time

The Governors have determined policy on approving holidays in term time as follows:

- Governors neither ban all term-time holidays nor bestow a right to all families to time off for family holidays.
- Parents are informed of this policy on entry to the school (Opening Evening) and then via the school Newsletter termly

- Governors will only authorise a total of 10 days per academic year per child
- Holidays during SATS weeks will not be authorised
- The system for applying for holidays is
  1. Written request for absence to HT at least 2 weeks prior to holiday
  2. Letter considered and application form given
  3. Meeting arranged to discuss holiday if appropriate
  4. Letter of approval / non-approval sent to parents(see Appendix)
- Maximum holiday total of 10 days or a % attendance of less than 90% may trigger a refusal for further holiday absence
- Investigation of failure to return post holiday – school administrator or class teacher will inform HT on first additional absent day. Parents will then be contacted by HT
- Parents are informed by letter that further absence beyond those permitted above could result in the HT involving the local authority attendance officer

### Extended Leave

Extended leave must be brought to the attention of the HT at least ½ term prior to the absence. A meeting will then be arranged between HT/parents/class teacher and Local authority representative as appropriate.

This system is communicated to parents via prospectus and annual reminder in Newsletter.

All approved requests or denied requests will be recorded by meeting minutes and written confirmation from the HT to parents

When absence on dates where no approval is given, or failure to return on an agreed date occurs, the school will

- initially contact parents
- consider a referral to Children's Integrated Services and parent contract
- penalty notices may be issued
- removal from roll may subsequently be considered

### **Strategies for promoting/improving attendance**

There are a variety of school-based strategies that contribute to schools effectively improving attendance. These can be found on the Behaviour and Attendance National Strategies and DCSF Attendance & Good Practice websites which give details of the main elements of effective practice in attendance management in schools. The framework also demonstrates how this policy integrates with other policies that impact on attendance, as listed above. Some aspects that the school utilises include:

- Informing parents regularly of absence procedures
- Incentives and rewards (e.g. certificates, special time and HT congratulation letters) allocated as appropriate
- External agencies may be used to support families in the positive benefits of good attendance

- Transition work is undertaken between Key Stages to prepare children for change (through PHSE & SEAL)
- There is a “first day calling” system
- The school adopts a zero tolerance to bullying through proactive work delivered through SEAL and PHSE
- An enriched creative curriculum and differentiated learning is used to address different learning styles and maintain high motivation and willingness to attend school
- The use of Learning mentors will be considered if appropriate
- Reintegration programmes following exclusion, extended medical absence and non-attendance will be discussed with HT/parents/class teacher prior to re-admission
- Individual pupils/groups/year groups may be given targets for attendance. Full co-operation from parents will be sought in this instance
- Collaboration with other schools is promoted
  - To share good practice
  - In respect of exploring the use of managed transfers

### Parenting Contracts - Attendance

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2002 makes provision for the use of Parenting Contracts where attendance is a cause for concern. Either the school or the Local Authority can initiate such contracts. Whilst not all Parenting Contracts have resource implications, where additional support does have resource implications this would be the responsibility of the Governing Body where the contract is initiated by the school.

The Local Authority has issued a Code of Conduct for the use of such Parenting Contracts, The school has identified here in the Procedural Framework the circumstances where they might ask parents to enter into a Parenting Contract, both within and outside of the CAF process:

- The circumstances where school might wish to suggest a contract are
  - Lateness before register closes – more than twice per week for a period of 4 weeks or more
  - Lateness after register closes – more than twice a week for a period of 2 weeks or more
  - Absence of less than 80% during 1 half term
- The range and nature of requirements that would be expected under such contracts – parents would be expected to meet with the HT to discuss and agree detail in the contract
- Parenting support groups will be invited to the meeting if required at the discretion of the HT
- The duration of such contracts – implemented according to need
- The system for review – this will be agreed at the first meeting

- The possible rewards/acknowledgement where contracts have proved successful – school praise and reward systems used for both child and parents as appropriate
- The possible actions where contracts have been refused – further meetings with HT and Governor and involvement with LCC attendance officer
- The possible actions where contracts have been unsuccessful – LCC guidelines on non-attendance will be followed

### Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices will be available for **any of the uses** identified in the agreed Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices drawn up by the Local Authority following all the required consultation.

### Removal from Roll

The school may only remove pupils from roll in accordance with the criteria set out in Regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 which states that schools should be aware of the need to notify the Local Authority prior to removal of a pupil's name from roll in a range of circumstances.

Setting aside the issue of safeguarding a child's safety and well-being, inconsistent practice in identifying pupils who have gone missing and delays in appropriate removal from roll of such pupils can have a significant impact on a school's attendance figures. It is therefore important that the school has clear arrangements for identifying such pupils, for referring them promptly to CIS for investigation and for agreed removal from roll where appropriate.

The Local Authority has a number of Children Missing Education (CME) Officers who can support the School in making enquiries to trace such pupils and hence confirm with schools when a pupil may be removed from roll. The framework should therefore set out

- HT is responsible for identifying pupils who may have gone missing
- HT is responsible for promptly referring such pupils to the CME Officer
- Bursar in school is responsible for completing the Common Transfer Form under the s2s system once a pupil has been traced elsewhere?
- HT is responsible for collating the evidence required before a pupil can be removed from roll when their whereabouts cannot be established and the process for registering the pupils with the Missing Pupils Database
- HT/Governors are responsible for deciding whether a pupil can in fact be removed from roll
- HT notifies the Authority in the first instance that a pupil is to be removed from roll to be educated otherwise than at school

## **Systems for dealing with attendance issues**

### School based systems for dealing with lateness

The school has clearly defined systems for identifying pupils whose punctuality is a cause for concern, and for implementing work with those pupils.

- **All staff** are responsible for working with pupils regarding punctuality
- The HT is responsible for working with parents regarding punctuality
- Pupils will be offered support by class teachers and support staff to discuss their options for improving punctuality in the home
- Verbal discussion with parents will take place initially to give support for improving lateness
- A letter of concern regarding lateness may be sent to parents following a trial period for improvement
- A Parenting Contract may be issued and discussed if no improvement is achieved
- Penalty Notices will be considered on an individual case basis

### School based systems for dealing with absences

The school has clearly defined systems for identifying pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern, and for implementing work with those pupils.

- System of first day contact is in place
- Letters of concern are issued as appropriate by the HT
- Letters of concern include an invite to parents to come into school for discussion
- Strategies for support, including the use of school arranged Parenting Contracts , will be discussed at the parent meeting
- Further school based action with more senior staff involved may be put in place where improvement is not noted within a 2 week period
- The CAF process may be initiated at any stage where the concern escalates
- If concerns remain following the introduction of a Parenting Contract ,Children's Integrated Services may be contacted

## **Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation and Action Planning**

The school has identified the HT, attendance lead and school administrator as staff with specific responsibility for monitoring whole school attendance and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's policy and procedures, which include

- Analysis of absence data ½ termly
- Feedback and analysis of attendance data is carried out termly with
  - Governors
  - Staff
  - Pupils

- Parents
- Patterns of broken weeks by individual pupils
- Patterns of absence for individual pupils including persistent absence
- Misuse or inconsistent use of absence codes across the school
- Trends in reasons for absence such as
  - Extended medical leave
  - Use of C (other authorised absence)
  - Holidays/Extended Leave
  - Exclusions, etc
- Trends in particular groups (ethnic groups, gender), forms or years and in particular Children Looked After.
- Facility for lesson monitoring
- How the data obtained informs action planning, and is linked to the school development plan and future revisions of the Whole School Attendance Policy
- How the data obtained is linked with governors' monitoring
- How the data obtained is linked to targets for individual children, groups and the whole school
- Resource implications for this monitoring, evaluation, planning and implementation is considered annually
- Data is returned promptly to the Local Authority and DCSF within deadlines
- Base line data is obtained and used to evaluate the impact of specific interventions
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's systems for registration, lateness etc is carried out annually

***Exemplars of good practice can be found in the Attendance file (Templates and Good Practice section)***