



## ***‘Whole School Attendance Policy’***



Updated	Mar 2020
Reviewed	Mar 2023

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## Policy Aims

### Introduction

It is recognised that regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. This policy has been written following the guidelines as set out in the DFE July 2019 document ‘*School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities.*’

Cottingham CofE Primary School is committed to monitoring and promoting the regular attendance of all our pupils. It is recognised that irregular attendance can seriously disrupt continuity of learning, undermine educational progress, impede a child’s ability to develop friendship groups and can lead to lower attainment.

This policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which the pupils feel safe, secure and valued. *At Cottingham CofE, with God’s help, we CARE for ourselves and each other. With God’s help we BUILD strong and healthy relationships.*
- Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated, stimulating and relevant curriculum.
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil’s successes and achievements.
- Raising the awareness of the importance of good attendance.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

## School Procedures

### Recording absence

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised. This can be amended later by the Office Staff if they become aware of the reason for absence. Codes for absence are available on all registers.

### Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 09.00am. The registers will remain open until 9.15 unless noted otherwise due to adverse weather conditions, traffic congestion, and lateness of transport for example. [DFES guidance suggests a maximum of 30 minutes but schools can choose to use a shorter period.] Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation (See above) In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorized absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will be at 13.00 for the whole school. Any children absent for the morning session should attend registration at this time. The register will remain open until 13:15.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close. **This will apply**

**to all children who arrive in school after 09.00 and need to enter the school via the main office. The Mill Road entrance will be locked promptly at 9:00.**

### **First Day Absence**

Parent/carer are asked to contact the school via the telephone on the first day of absence before 09.30 or sooner if possible. If the parent/carer have not made contact then a member of the school office will phone them after 09.30. The information gathered will be marked in the absence book and the registers will be updated.

### **Third Day Absence**

If after 3 days the child is still away and no reason has been provided nor any verbal communication has been had then a standard letter will be sent out requesting information about the absence from the parent/carer. Parent/carer will be asked to either write to the school or phone them with the details. If the school are concerned about the absence they may contact a relevant service including the Education Entitlement Service in order to alert them to their concerns. This may happen before the third day, if no contact with the parent/carer can be made. This absence could also be seen as a potential safeguarding concern and will be treated as such if necessary.

### **Continuing Absence**

If the period of absence continues then, in consultation with the Headteacher, a further letter will be sent and a possible home visit made by school staff with no prior notice given. The school may contact the Education Entitlement Service or other appropriate agencies to register concerns and consider action to be taken that could include a fine and/or criminal proceedings.

### **Frequent/Persistent Absence**

It is the responsibility of each teacher and the school office to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the Education Entitlement Service and appropriate action may be taken.

### **A Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. *At Cottingham CofE, with God's help, we CARE for ourselves and each other. With God's help we BUILD strong and healthy relationships.* This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

### **Absence notes**

Notes/letters received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

### **Positive Measures to Promoting attendance**

- The school has an Attendance Trophy which is handed out on a termly basis to the class whose attendance is the highest that term. Those children are then awarded with a mufti day.
- Ensure that the children receive a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum, encouraging them to attend school.

- Regular opportunities to take part in extracurricular activity including sports and musical tuition for example.
- Regular attendance updates are shared with the community via the school's 'Fortnightly' newsletter.
- Throughout the year, a number of events are planned to encourage the attendance of children and their families.

### **Monitoring Patterns of Attendance**

The Headteacher will meet with the Office Administrator regularly (at least half termly) to discuss patterns of absences. Children's absences will be scrutinized and the reasons for absence clarified. Parents/carer of children whose attendance is below 95% will be sent an attendance letter each half term. Parents/carer of children with attendance below 90% will also be sent a letter and where necessary contacted by the Headteacher. If the Head teacher and Office Administrator are concerned about the attendance then appropriate action will be taken, depending on circumstances. All class teachers will be involved in discussion re: individual pupils.

Action could include:

1. Continued monitoring
2. Attendance below 95%/90% parents sent an attendance letter each half term.
3. Attendance below 90% Head teacher discussion with parents/child.
4. Continued attendance below 90% attendance meeting and 5 week attendance target set.
5. Discussion with appropriate outside agencies
6. Discussion and referral with Education Entitlement Service
7. Possible further action to include fines/criminal proceedings

### **Children missing in Education**

If a child is absent for 10 days and the school has no information regarding the absence and cannot contact the parent/carer then the school will contact Education Entitlement Service and log the child as missing in education.

### **Medical Appointments.**

Where a child misses registration of either a morning or afternoon session because of a medical appointment, the absence will be recorded as 'authorised absence' in the register.

### **Parental Requests for Holidays during Term Time.**

Nationally, Government policy is that Headteachers may **NOT** grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Schools are now expected to adopt a more robust and challenging response to requests for leave for such holidays. Parents **DO NOT** have a right to expect leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday during term time.

Permission for family holidays in term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher or where evidence has been provided by an employer that leave cannot be accommodated during the school holidays without significant consequence to the business. Application in these instances should be made to the Headteacher on the 'Holiday Form'

which is available from the school office. Leave will certainly not be granted where it coincides with the start of the school year, SATs or any other significant event in the school diary.

If parents/carer decide to arrange for their annual holiday during term time and the holiday is unauthorised by the Head Teacher, homework in the form of missed lessons will **NOT** be provided.

### Long Term Absences

Children who are absent from school for a prolonged period of time will be integrated back into the classroom at a pace which is appropriate to them and in close liaison with the class teacher, parent and any other supporting adult.

### The registration system

The School will use a computerised collection system (SIMS) for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

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
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed)	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	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

## Parent/Carer responsibility

Further information regarding parental/carer responsibility can be found within the DFE document titled, '*School attendance parental responsibility measures - Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police.*'

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/581539/School\\_attendance\\_parental\\_responsibility\\_measures\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/581539/School_attendance_parental_responsibility_measures_statutory_guidance.pdf)

## Categorisation of absence

**Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.**

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

### **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

**Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Local authorities and all schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. In addition to using these powers, local authorities and schools can develop other practices to improve attendance.

Local authorities, police constables, school governing bodies, school head teachers (and staff authorised by the head) and teachers-in-charge of pupil referral units are required by law to have

regard to the relevant parts of this guidance when carrying out their functions in relation to parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices. This means that while the guidance does not have the force of law, there is an expectation that it will be followed unless there is good reason to depart from it.

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