



THE CAVENDISH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date approved: October 2015
Date review: October 2017

The government expectation is that school children achieve over 95% attendance. At The Cavendish School, the staff and Governors are committed to promoting these excellent levels of attendance and punctuality, enabling our students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and we want parents/carers to join us in this community commitment to high standards. Excellent levels of attendance and punctuality will help the children in our school community to maximise their learning, preparing them for the world of work.

Responsibilities and Expectations

The responsibility for excellent attendance is shared between parents, students and the school. It is important that these groups understand the expectations which this policy makes of them.

School:

- The Cavendish School will provide a safe learning environment.
- The Cavendish School will ensure that records of attendance are maintained accurately and consistently on a daily basis in accordance with Government legislation and guidance.
- Records will be kept for a minimum of 3 years.
- The Cavendish School will promote and encourage excellent levels of attendance.
- The Cavendish School will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality and unexplained absence.
- The Cavendish School will work closely with parents/carers and students to support regular attendance promptly responding should attendance/punctuality be a cause for concern.
- The Cavendish School will provide attendance and punctuality details on students' reports.
- The Cavendish School will forward EWN1 'Deletion From Roll' form to the Attendance Team within 5 days of removing a child from the school roll, having made all reasonable checks to locate the child. Should the school have concerns the Headteacher must ensure the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) is alerted immediately. The AIO must also be informed once a child has been absent for 2 weeks.
- The lead Designated Senior Person will monitor fixed term exclusions, reduced timetables, students attending alternative education placement/provision and students taken off roll. This is included as part of the safeguarding role.

Parents/Carers:

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attends school regularly and punctually.

Parents/carers should

- Ensure that their child(ren) are properly dressed and equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Instil in their child(ren) an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Impress upon their child(ren) the need to observe the school's Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- Take an active interest in their children's school career, eg praising good work and behaviour, attending Parent Consultation Evenings etc.
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve any issues which may lead to poor attendance.
- Inform the school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school, and maintain daily contact, until the child returns, unless otherwise agreed with the school.
- Ensure that the school is informed of any changes of contact details.

- Avoid taking leave of absence during term time.

Students:

- All students are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
- Students must remember to hand in any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant member of staff.

Local Authority

The AIO supports and advises The Cavendish School regularly on school attendance and how to improve attendance and punctuality. However, in some cases of persistently low attendance, cases can be referred to the AIO which can result in legal proceedings against parents/carers.

- Registers will be made available for inspection by the AIO.
- The AIO will be notified of any student removed from roll.

Registration

- The Cavendish School day begins at 8.35am. Students should not arrive before 8am.
- Registers are called at 8.40am and 12.30pm using an electronic system SIMs.
- Registers are marked consistently by staff using attendance codes in accordance with The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 2006.
- Registers are called within the first 15 minutes of every lesson using SIMs. Paper copies can be obtained from Student Services if this is unable to take place and returned in full.
- A hard copy of the registers will be stored for 3 years.
- Students are expected to be ready to learn.
- Students will not leave the school premises without permission.

Lateness

- Any student arriving after 8.35am or 12.35pm should report to Student Services to be signed in – a full satisfactory reason must be provided.
- Any student arriving after the register has been called and before 9am and 12.50pm will be marked as 'L', late before closure of register (present).
- Any student arriving after the register closes, after 9am and 12.50pm, will be marked 'U', late after closure of register (unauthorised absence) unless the Headteacher agrees to an alternative register symbol, eg 'C' (other authorised circumstances).

Absence

- Parents must provide notification to The Cavendish School for all absences – records will be kept for 3 years.
- It is the Headteacher's decision whether to authorise an absence or not. This responsibility may be delegated to other staff within the school.
- All medical/dental appointments should be made, whenever possible, out of school hours.
- The school operates a '1st Day Response' policy. Should parents not contact the school by 9am on the first day of absence with the reason for the absence, the school will contact the parents/carers for the reason.
- If a child is ill, parents are requested to inform the school on the first day of absence and then daily until the child returns to school or otherwise agreed with school. It is important communication is maintained.
- Should a child need to leave or return to school during the school day, office staff must be notified. A child must be signed in and out at the school office. This is a Safeguarding requirement.
- Students must not contact parents directly if they feel unwell. They must report to Student Services/Matron, who will make the appropriate action.

Authorised Absence:

Most absence will be authorised by the Headteacher (and designated staff). Authorised absence is legitimate absence from school.

Unauthorised Absence:

Absence will be unauthorised by the Headteacher if she considers the absence is not legitimate.

Absence will be unauthorised:

- When no explanation has been provided by parents/carers following a request from the school;
- The Headteacher is dissatisfied with the explanation provided;
- The reason for the absence is not directly related to the child, e.g. parent is ill;
- When the absence is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance e.g. shopping during school hours, birthday trips, term time holiday;
- Leave of absence is taken without the agreement of the Headteacher;

The school operates Fixed Penalty Notices under subsection (1) of section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Penalty Notices:

If a student has at least 21 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term, including leave of absence where permission has not been requested or has been requested and denied, the Headteacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued to the parents/carers by the Local Authority. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Fines can be issued to each parent/carer for each child. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty. Failure to pay the fine may result in prosecution for the offence.

NOTE- the Government classifies children with attendance under 90% as Persistent Absentees. Therefore, the school will consider unauthorising absence for students with attendance persistently under 90%. At such time, the school may request medical evidence, e.g. letter, appointment cards, medication, etc.

Follow-Up Action:

Lateness:

- Parents are expected to provide a reason for lateness, and students must sign the late book with a full explanation.
- Parents whose children arrive regularly late for school will be contacted by a member of school staff.

Students arriving late for school will be placed in a break time detention on that day unless the school is provided with a full explanation. Students that arrive late regularly will be contacted home by the Head of Year and asked to attend the Attendance Panel at The Cavendish School with parents to implement an Action Plan.

Absence:

- The Cavendish School operates a '1st Day Response' policy. At 9am text messages are sent home to all those students marked as absent for that session. If a response is not received from the parent/carer a phone call is made to ask for reason of absence.
- For those students that are classified as Persistent Absentees a member of staff is responsible for contacting home via phone call as soon after 9am as possible. These phone calls are made by the Attendance Officer, Head of Year, Student Welfare Officer or lead LSA.
- A Student Premium Attendance Officer will also call students/parents/carers before 8.15am if a student is classified as Persistent Absentee and this intervention is deemed appropriate.
- For Persistent Absentee students when attendance remains under 90% despite intervention by the school, the school may request medical confirmation or copies of medical letter/appointment cards.
- The school will provide a support plan to assist students returning to school from a long term absence.

The Cavendish School will monitor whole school attendance every 2 weeks. Analysis by year group, gender and vulnerable groups will be included compared to the school target of 95% and national average from the latest RaiseOnline document.

- A series of letters to ensure a consistent and equal approach with a date on each letter when the student's attendance will be reviewed and at what percentage this process is triggered (see attached process for response to poor attendance).
- The school will notify the AIO prior to consultation visits and via email when necessary.
- The Cavendish School operates Penalty Notices.
- All contact with parents/carers will be logged on a telephone log form or Meeting Record and placed in the students file.

Rewards and Consequences

Rewards – certificates, letters and vouchers are issued in recognition of excellent and improved attendance/punctuality (see Behaviour for Learning Policy).

Consequences – break time detentions are issued for lateness on a daily basis (see Behaviour for Learning Policy).

Leave of Absence During Term Time

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off during term time for a holiday.

In accordance with DfE guidance, requests to the Headteacher will be considered on an individual basis and must be made on a form available from the school office at least 4 weeks prior to the commencement of the requested leave of absence. The Headteacher will respond in writing (H1, H2 & H3).

Should the leave of absence not be requested and not agreed by the Headteacher and taken, the leave will be unauthorised, placing parents/carers at risk of the school applying to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued to the parents/carers. Should the leave of absence exceed 20 sessions the school will apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice fine to be issued without warning. Should the absence be part of ongoing poor attendance, this may result in the involvement of an Attendance Improvement Officer.

Retrospective permission will not be granted for leave of absence already taken.

Parents/carers are expected to contact the school if they are unable to return from leave of absence on the agreed date, providing a reason for the delay. They may be requested to provide confirmation of the reason for the delay.

Should unauthorised leave of absence lead to cumulative absence exceeding 20 sessions across the current and/or previous term, the school can apply to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice fine to be issued to the parents/carers.

Removal from School Roll

The school will adhere to The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Process

Letter 1	Under 95% (but over 90%)
	Review after 4 weeks
Letter 2	Under 90% - referral to Attendance Panel Meeting with Attendance Panel (DSP and HOY/ HOY and Pastoral member of staff / HT)
	Formal Meeting takes place – Meeting Record comp – placed on child’s file and sent to parent
	Review after 4 weeks
Letter 3 or 4	Improving attendance (L3) OR unauthorised absence (L4) and consider if further meeting necessary
	Formal Meeting takes place (if appropriate) – Meeting Record completed – placed on child’s file and sent to parent and AIO
	Review after 4 weeks
Letter 3 or 5	Improving attendance (L3) or B1 (L5) At Risk of Breach issued
	Review after 3 weeks
Letter 6 or 7	Improving attendance and not pursuing Fixed Penalty Notice (L6) OR B2 (L7) Formal Warning
	Review after 3 weeks
Letter 6 or Application LA	Improving attendance and not pursuing Fixed Penalty Notice (L6) OR Application to Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice
Letter 9	Over 95% for 8 week period – discharge from Attendance Panel
H1	Form for Parent to Request Leave of Absence
H2	Authorising Leave of Absence
H3	Not authorising Leave of Absence