



## Attendance Policy (Pupils) (Including Children Missing Education)

Believing in Excellence means that the Trust has key values that all members of our schools' community live by.

These are:

- Respect;
- Resilience;
- Responsibility.

Date of Policy	January 2022
Date agreed by Chief Executive Officer	February 2022
Date of next review	July 2023

Cavendish Education Trust (Eastbourne) is an exempt charity and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with Company Number 8135372. Its registered office is at Eldon Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 1UE

## **Contents**

- 1 Statement of intent
- 2 Legal framework
- 3 Definitions of student absence
- 4 Expectations, roles and responsibilities
- 5 Absence procedures
- 6 Requesting an absence
- 7 Monitoring and review of absence
- 8 School support to ensure regular attendance
- 9 Rewarding good attendance
- 10 Children missing education
- 11 Elective home education
- 12 Complaints

Appendix A: National Attendance Codes

# 1. Statement of Intent

To ensure every pupil within Cavendish Education Trust (CET) Schools' achieves and maintains excellent attendance; enabling them to gain maximum benefit from the education and wider opportunities on offer as part of our community.

To ensure all interested parties understand their role and responsibilities involved in promoting and supporting excellent student attendance.

There is a very strong, evidenced, correlation between rates of school attendance and academic attainment, both nationally and within CET schools. Pupils who have regular attendance are far more likely to achieve academic success.

# 2. Legal Framework

- 2.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to;
  - a. Education Act 1996
  - b. Equality Act 2010
  - c. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
  - d. DfE (2019) School Attendance
  - e. DfE (2016) Children Missing Education
  - f. DfE (2021) Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)
  - g. DfE (2021) Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities
- 2.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies;
  - a. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
  - b. Complaints Procedures Policy.

# 3. Definitions of Pupil Absence

- 3.1 CET defines "absence" as either:
  - a. Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - b. Not attending school for any reason.
- 3.2 CET defines an "authorised absence" as:
  - a. An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
  - b. Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the school day for which the school has granted leave.
  - c. Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
  - d. An absence due to a family emergency.
- 3.3 CET defines an "unauthorised absence" as, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. Parents keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.

- b. Truancy during the school day.
- c. Absences which have not been properly explained e.g with specific dates .
- d. Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- e. Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- f. Absence due to day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- g. Leaving school for no or unnecessary reason during the day.

3.4 CET defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as Attendance of 90% or less across the academic year for any reason.

## 4. Expectations, Roles and Responsibilities

### Pupil Expectations

- 4.1 The CET minimum expected attendance for each and every student is 97%. This is referred to throughout this policy as “regular attendance”.
- 4.2 Excellent punctuality is also an expectation of pupils. Being punctual each and every day prepares pupils well for the world of work and later life. All pupils are expected to;
  - a. Be in school on time and arrive at all lessons on time.
  - b. Be punctual to all other events, trips and activities they take part in and that are linked to the school.
  - c. In exceptional cases where a pupil has a diagnosed medical condition/need, the condition/need is supported by an up-to-date diagnosis, and where the specific condition/need is known to impact the pupils ability to attend school we will make reasonable adjustments to the application of this policy/attendance processes.
  - d. Where evidence is not forthcoming or there is no clinical professional’s support for the need for absence no adjustments can/will be made.

### Parental Expectations

- 4.3 Through sending your child to a CET school, parents and carers accept their statutory responsibilities and commit to sharing the academy’s moral imperative to ensuring their child attends regularly and has excellent punctuality.
- 4.4 The law further supports these expectations; The Education Act 1996 states; “*as a parent, you must ensure your child receives appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. If your child is registered at a school, then they must attend regularly and punctually. It is your responsibility as the parent to ensure good attendance.*”
- 4.5 Parents must provide accurate and up to date contact details for themselves, including at least two telephone numbers.
- 4.6 Parents must provide contact details for at least one other responsible adult, including at least two telephone numbers.

4.7 Parents are responsible for updating the school of any changes.

### **Local Governing Board Expectations**

4.8 Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the school.

4.9 Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

4.10 Handling complaints regarding the policy as outlined in the Complaints Policy.

4.11 Having regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

### **School Expectations**

4.12 The Head of Phase/School is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of the school and distributing these to parents.

4.13 All staff will be responsible for;

- a. Following the attendance policy, and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- b. Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- c. Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.

4.14 Staff will take the register within the first ten minutes of registration periods (and each and every lesson - secondary only).

4.15 The school will ensure that every pupil has access to full –time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

4.16 The school will inform the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:

- a. Are being educated from home.
- b. No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
- c. Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
- d. Have been permanently excluded.

4.17 Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admission register if, after making reasonable enquiries the school and LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child..

- 4.18 The school will use the national attendance codes to enable the academy to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. Please refer to Appendix A

## 5. Absence Procedures

- 5.1 Only the Head of Phase/School (not parents/carers or other relatives) can authorise the absence of your child from school. There is no automatic right for a child to be absent from school. The Head of Phase/School may require you to provide evidence of the reason for your child's absence otherwise the absence may be recorded on the official school register as unauthorised.
- 5.2 If, for any reason, your child is not attending school parent/carers are expected to contact the school with details before 08.00am via;
- Edulink, where possible.
  - Emailing the school directly
  - Telephoning the school absence line
- 5.3 Parent/Carers are required to report each and every day of absence in this way.
- 5.4 An absence alert will be sent to the parent/carer of any pupil who has not reported their absence. If no response is received this will be followed up with a telephone call.
- 5.5 The school will always follow up any absences in order to;
- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
  - Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
  - Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
  - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

## 6. Requesting an Absence

- 6.1 We recognise that parents/carers may, at times, request absence from school for their child. . The school, following Government and Local Authority guidelines, will not grant permission for holidays taken in term time. Any holiday taken in term time will be recorded as unauthorised and could result in a fine being issued or legal proceedings.
- 6.2 Absences will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are **unlikely** to include;
- Leaving early to go on a family trip/holiday or similar
  - Going to a family wedding

The term exceptional will be considered on an individual, case by case, basis. Part of the consideration will be the impact the potential absence is likely to have on the individual student's education. The Head of Phase/School decision is final in relation to authorising exceptional absences.

- 6.3 In the case of an unauthorised withdrawal from learning, the Education Support Behaviour and Attendance Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice (of up to £120) will be issued for each child taken out of school.
- 6.4 Any request for an absence from school must be made by completing the Withdrawal from Learning form and returning it to the school at least 14 days in advance.
- 6.5 If your child is absent from school for 3 days or more due to illness, or for any other reason, you may be asked to provide evidence to support the absence in order for the school to authorise it.

## 7. Persistent Lateness and Unauthorised Absence

- 7.1 Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked absent with a code U. This is classified as a missing session and is an unauthorised absence
- 7.2 If unauthorised lateness becomes a cause for concern, then a late warning letter will be sent to parents/carers and attendance monitored over a period of 10 school weeks. If 10 sessions of unauthorised lateness and/or any other unauthorised absences are then accrued during the 10 school week period a Penalty Notice will be issued. **Please note that Penalty Notices are issued to *each* parent for *each* child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days.**

## 8. Monitoring and review of attendance

- 8.1 CET monitors attendance and punctuality regularly throughout the year.
- 8.2 CET attendance target is 97%.
- 8.3 The policy will be reviewed annually by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
- 8.4 Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

## 9. School Support for regular attendance

Staff will address attendance and punctuality concerns in a timely manner, through agreed processes. This may involve;

- 9.1 Communication with parent/carers either in person, by letter, telephone call, e-mail or a combination of these.
- 9.2 Meeting with pupils in school to discuss our concerns.
- 9.3 Meetings with parents/carers and/or externally involved professionals.
- 9.4 Setting attendance targets and using attendance support plans.
- 9.5 Pastoral support and onward referrals to specific services.

9.6 Liaison (with permission) with external medical professionals to evidence specific conditions/needs.

9.7 Making announced or unannounced home visits.

## 10. Rewarding good attendance

10.1 Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:

- a. Recognition in assemblies.
- b. School rewards, trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance is below 90% these privileges may be taken away.

## 11 Children Missing in Education

11.1 The term 'Children Missing Education' refers to all children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll or receiving a suitable education other than being in school (for example, at home, privately or in alternative provision.) A suitable education is defined as being in 'efficient full time education suitable to her/his needs, ability & aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have.'

11.2 The role of the individual school is to identify children who have failed to attend at the start of Reception and year 7. If this is the case the school will attempt to make contact with the parents to establish why they have not attended and the absence will be recorded appropriately on the school attendance register. If there is no contact from the family the school will check with ESCC admissions to ascertain whether or not they have been registered at another school. If the school or Local Authority are unable to establish the whereabouts of the child we will notify the ESCC CME team.

11.3 If a pupil has a prolonged unexplained period of absence or fails to return from a holiday or exclusion the school will follow the normal procedure for absence. If the school is unable to establish the whereabouts of the child and/or the reason for the absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised on the school attendance register and the pupil will be referred to the ESCC CME team. If the criteria is met and guidance has been followed the school may then remove the child from their roll.

## 12 Home education

12.1 If a parent wishes to home educate their child they need to inform the individual school in writing of their intention to home educate. The school will formally write to the parent and notify the home education team and remove the child from their school roll.

12.2 Every CET School must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register.

12.3 Every CET school must also notify the local authority **within five days** of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition



point – at the start of the first year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

## **13 Complaints**

Please refer to the CET complaints policy if you have any concerns in relation to the procedures or processes that have been applied in relation to the school's management of the Pupil Attendance Policy.

## **Appendix A – National Attendance Codes**

The academy will use the national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

/ = Present in the morning

\ = Present in the afternoon

L = Late arrival before the register has closed

C = Authorised absence

E = Excluded but no alternative provision made

H = Authorised holiday

I = Illness

M = Medical or dental appointments

R = Religious observance

B = Off site educational activity

G = Unauthorised holiday

O = Unauthorised absence

U = Arrived after registration closed

N = Reason not yet provided

X = Not required to be in school

S = Study leave

T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

W = Work experience

V = Educational visit or trip

P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity

J = At an interview with an expected employer or another educational establishment

D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment

Y = Exceptional circumstances

Z = Student not on admission register

# = Planned whole or partial school closure