

## Attendance Policy (Pupils)

Believing in Excellence means that the school has key values that all members of our school community live by. These are:

- Respect;
- Resilience;
- Responsibility.

These values apply to three important spheres of life:

- Believing in Excellence for ourselves;
- Believing in Excellence for others;
- Believing in Excellence for our environment.

Date of Policy	June 2020 – updated July 2021
Date agreed by Governing Body	July 2020 – agreed July 2021
Date of next review	June 2022
Lead Member of Staff	D Kilby, Assistant Headteacher

## **Cavendish's Aims**

- To enable all pupils to achieve their full potential, whatever their family circumstances, race, gender, or ability. All pupils are of equal value and therefore equally deserving of our time, energy, patience, support and respect.
- Cavendish will provide a high quality, broad, balanced and relevant education and will aim to fulfil pupil's individual potential.
- Cavendish will provide a disciplined, caring environment and will aim to develop awareness of each pupil's' own moral and spiritual capacity and sensitivity for the values and beliefs of others.
- Cavendish will encourage success at all levels, in all activities and will aim to maximise individual physical potential and to develop a creative and aesthetic awareness.
- Cavendish will encourage personal responsibility and will aim to develop self-esteem, mutual respect and understanding of equal opportunities.

## **Aims of the Policy**

- To achieve maximum possible attendance at the school. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.
- To ensure that all pupils make good progress as a result of good attendance at school.
- To provide a framework for the attendance team, Progress Leaders, tutors and other staff involved in the pastoral care to maximise opportunities for pupils to fulfil their potential.

## **Philosophy**

### **The school's expectation of pupils is a minimum attendance of 97%**

- High attendance is achievable for the majority of pupils if the school provides a stimulating, broad and relevant curriculum pitched at the correct level for each pupil.
- There will be some pupils who find attendance more difficult and they will require extra support, guidance and incentive to attend regularly.
- Effective lines of communication and clearly defined lines of responsibility form the basis of good attendance.
- The key partners who have responsibilities in this matter are parents, the school, the Education Welfare Officer and the Local Authority.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Role of Parents**

- Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly and that having arrived they remain in the school.
- Parents should ensure that their children arrive on time, properly attired and prepared for learning.
- Parents should be encouraged to contact the school, to discuss any problems surrounding attendance with the tutor or class teacher.
- Parents should notify the school on the first day of absence, and any subsequent days by telephone, e-mail or via Edulink app, stating the reason for the absence and when the child is likely to return to school.
- The concerns of long-term absence of 3 school days and above, should be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer and suitable evidence provided, this may need to include the dates your child is unable to attend school and the date that they can return to school.
- Support the school in improving their child's attendance by attending meetings, as requested, and supporting any attendance improvement plan implemented by the school.

### **The Role of the School**

- It is the responsibility of the school to encourage and monitor attendance and to deal with any issues which may lead to non-attendance.
- There is a requirement placed on the school (not the parent or the LA) to classify all absences as authorised or unauthorised.
- The school is legally required to produce attendance statistics for publication.
- The school will seek to reinforce the importance placed on regular attendance by communication with parents by various means e.g. the school prospectus, the Governors Annual Report, newsletters to parents, school reports and Parents' meetings.
- The school will authorise an absence if the child is too ill to attend and the school accepts the reasons given as valid. It is not normal practice to authorise a whole day for medical and dental appointments. The school may request that parents provide evidence to support an absence.
- The school is required to report continuous unauthorised pupil absence of more than 20 school days to the Local Authority, if the whereabouts of the child is unknown.
- The school will adopt schemes for the rewarding of good and improved attendance and for the reintegration of children with attendance difficulties.

## **The Role of the Tutor/Teacher**

- The tutor/teacher is the most important person to encourage good attendance.
- The first line of school response to irregular attendance should come from the tutor who will liaise with the pupil and parents. If the tutor is unable to resolve the matter and attendance deteriorates or if established lines of communication between home and school break down, the case may be referred to the Progress Leader or Education Welfare Officer.
- The morning register must be recorded at the beginning of the school day and again during the identified pm session. Morning registers will close 30 minutes after opening.
- Ensure any pupil who is late completes detentions in line with the behaviour policy.
- The tutor will promote attendance every week as part of the tutor time programme in the secondary phase.
- If parents/carers have not provided a reason for an absence and no response is received to messages, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Concerns about pupil absence, lateness or reporting should be shared with the Progress Leader or Head of Primary Phase and the Education Welfare Officer.

## **The Role of Subject Teachers in the Secondary Phase**

- Individual subject teachers will be responsible to taking an electronic register within the first 10 minutes of each lesson.
- If a pupil has been marked present for the AM register or any previous lesson, and is absent from the current lesson the teacher must inform emergency on call.
- If a pupil is present in lesson, was marked absent from tutor time the Attendance Office must be informed.

## **The Role of the Progress Leader in the Secondary Phase and Head of Primary Phase**

- To liaise regularly with tutors to monitor developments in cases of concern around attendance and punctuality.
- To meet the Education Welfare Officer on a weekly basis to monitor each child's attendance and discuss any concerns regarding attendance.
- To speak with pupils and parents where attendance has continued to decline despite intervention from the tutor.
- To meet parents in conjunction with the Education Welfare Officer of pupils whose attendance is 91% or below or where there is any other cause for concern.
- Support tutors of pupils who are consistently late to the school by ensuring appropriate sanctions are put in place and contact is made with home.

- To promote attendance and punctuality within assemblies and through the tutor programme.

### **The Role of the Attendance Office Team**

- The main role of the Attendance Office Team is to act as focal point for coordinating attendance information and communicating to others in the system.

### **The Role of the Education Welfare Officer**

- The Education Welfare Officer will act strategically to support the school in improving overall attendance by undertaking a regular review of the Attendance Policy and procedures and by the dissemination of good practice.
- The Education Welfare Officer will lead on rewards systems linked to attendance and punctuality and evaluate the impact of them.
- The Education Welfare Officer will contact the parent of any pupil with attendance of 91% or under, or where there is any other cause for concern, in liaison with the Progress Leader or Head of Primary Phase.
- The Education Welfare Officer will work in a consultative role with Progress Leaders and Head of Primary Phase to resolve any difficulties which may impede pupil access to education, either by regular attendance or otherwise and suggest solution based strategies for dealing with attendance concerns.
- The Education Welfare Officer will undertake planned remedial casework within defined timescales and maintain accurate and up to date records, ensuring regular communication with the Progress Leaders and Head of Primary Phase.
- The Education Welfare Officer will work in partnership with parents, school and pupils to provide solution focused support aimed at improving attendance.
- The Education Welfare Officer will support the legal process.

### **The Role of the Local Governing Body**

- The Education Act 1986 requires the governing body to produce an annual report for parents which includes the school's attendance figures.
- The governing body can play a part in establishing the importance of attendance and in providing support and encouragement.
- The governing body will monitor, challenge and support attendance in relation to the School Priority Plan.

### **Absence Request During Term Time**

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, government legislation no longer enables head teachers to authorise requests to withdraw a child from learning unless there are considered to be exceptional circumstances. It is for the Head Teacher to determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school *if* the leave is granted. If the reason for withdrawing a pupil from learning is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance and the pupil is nevertheless

taken out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in line with guidance from the DfE and the County Council.

**In the case of an unauthorised withdrawal from learning, the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service will be notified and 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. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid this will result in further legal intervention.**

**All requests to withdraw a pupil from learning must be completed on a Withdrawal from Learning form, letters will not be accepted. This should be returned to the school a minimum of 14 days before the start of the absence, where possible. In the event of a parent/carer not completing a Withdrawal from Learning form, a Penalty Notice will be issued.**

**Any absences immediately prior to or following a withdrawal from learning will not be authorised unless evidence is provided to support the reason for the absence.**

**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 to authorise it.**

### **Persistent Lateness and Unauthorised Absence**

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

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.**

### **Review and Evaluation**

Weekly, half-termly and annual attendance figures will be reviewed by the school for individual year groups by the Progress Leaders, Head of Primary Phase, Education Welfare Officer and the SLT lead with responsibility for attendance.

## **Children Missing in Education**

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and child criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

### **Statement of purpose**

This statement is designed to ensure that there is clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the school in relation to our statutory duty regarding Children Missing Education (CME). It is essential that we provide clear information to enable early intervention to help children, young people and their families to achieve positive outcomes. We need to ensure that;

- pupils who leave Cavendish School are dealt with in accordance with legislative requirements and the agreed local authority protocol.
- children are not able to 'go missing' from education.

### **Organisation**

- Cavendish School recognise that safeguarding children is a priority and that taking any pupil off of the school roll must always take this into account.

### **Framework**

- 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 otherwise than being in school (for example, at home, privately or in alternative provision.) A suitable definition 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.'
- This duty does not apply to children who are registered at school but have low attendance.
- Key documents used to inform this policy are;
  1. East Sussex Children Missing Education guidance 2015
  2. Keeping Children Safe in Education
  3. The Children's Act 2004 which underpins the need to work collaboratively with other agencies to ensure children are safely on a school roll.

### **Reasons why children go missing from education**

- Children at risk of harm or neglect
- Children of families who are highly mobile i.e. armed forces families, Gypsy, Roma and traveller families.
- Missing children or runaways
- Children and young people under the youth justice system
- Children in transition through from key stage 2 to 3 or 3 to 4
- Children of migrant families

## **Truancy**

Children who truant are more likely to leave school with no qualifications. DfE data shows that Children with no absence are more likely to achieve significantly higher grades in their GCSE examinations.

In East Sussex the CME team is an integral part of the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service who have responsibility to coordinate responses to referrals and review and develop procedures.

Children Missing Education  
St Mark's House  
14 Upperton Road  
Eastbourne  
BN27 2JQ  
01323 464 373  
[cme@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:cme@eastsussex.gov.uk)

The CME team also hold monthly meetings to discuss children who go missing (MISPER) or those at risk of sexual exploitation (MACSE).

## **Long term impact**

We are aware at Cavendish that the impact of poor attendance can have long term implications into adulthood. When a child is absent from education it is possible that they are at risk of being influenced by other worrying associations that place them at risk of abuse, crime, neglect, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, trafficking or abduction.

The role of the 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.

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.

## **Home education**

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

## **Fixed term exclusion**

If a pupil is excluded for a fixed term the school must provide work. If the exclusion is for more than 5 days the school has a duty to arrange full time education provision for the pupil.

**When a pupil is removed from the school admissions register we will follow the CME referral process;**

- Indicate the date and reason for the removal from the school roll and, if available, indicate the new school name and reason for transfer.
- Complete an electronic transfer (CTF) of the school file within 15 days.
- Complete a CME checklist (if required) and notify the local authority accordingly.
- **All schools** (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulation 1 (Annex A). This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school – unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.
- When removing a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register.
- Schools 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 if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).
- **All schools** 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.
- When adding a pupil's name, the notification to the local authority must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil.