



Calday Grange
Grammar School

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE POLICY

November 2017

Approved by Full Governing Body: 6th November 2017
Date of next review: November 2018

Aim

To raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in school life.

Purpose of this policy

- To secure attendance at school unless absence is authorised
- To identify problem area(s) that would explain non-attendance
- To work together with parents, school staff, and the educational social worker to maintain good attendance, securing help for students with problems.

Strategy

In order to deal with attendance problems effectively and efficiently, the following strategy will be followed by the school:

1. Registers need to be marked accurately according to guidance issued.
2. Attendance records kept for every class from year 7 to 11 and all non-attendance checked against the daily register that will be taken at am registration (8.40 am). P.M. registration will be taken from the lesson registration for P5. Attendance will be monitored during each lesson using the SIMS system.
3. Parents are required to inform the school of the absence of a child on the first day of absence, if this is not done, parents will be contacted to confirm the absence.
4. If an absence is known in advance parents are expected to inform the Administration Office in writing.
5. If a child is taken ill or, for any other reason, has to go home, contact with a responsible adult will be made by the Administration Office prior to the child leaving the premises.
6. Students remaining after school, but not with a member of staff, must register name, form and location with the Administration Office. No unsupervised child is to remain on site after 17.00.
7. All late arrivals must sign in at the Administration Office
8. Attendance Data

Student attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student's attendance is a cause for concern.

If attendance falls below 95.99% contact is made with home outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support. If attendance does not improve, the thresholds and actions outlined below are followed:

95.99%

- Form tutor will firstly establish the reason for student absence.
- Form tutor will contact parent/carer and raise concern
- Form tutor will meet with the student
- Form tutor will continue to monitor attendance

93%

- Head of Year will send out an initial letter to parents
- Head of Year will speak to student on a daily basis / mentor / support
- Liaise with parents and request medical evidence where possible
- Carry out home visits to confirm illness – these may be made together with the Head of Faculty Pastoral
- Refer student to Learning Mentor to monitor and improve Attendance & Punctuality

90%

- Director of Student Services will contact parents and invite them into school to conduct an attendance meeting and set targets.
- Absences will be analysed and referred through to Educational Social Worker when appropriate.

Below 90%

- Parents and students will be required to attend an Attendance Panel Meeting with Director of Student Services and Educational Social worker.
- If attendance does not improve, the ESW will conduct a home visit and legal action may follow.

A student will be considered to be persistently absent (PA) if he/she is away 10% of school sessions in an academic year i.e. 90% and below attendance.

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Caldy Grange Grammar School will share attendance data with the Department for Education, and the local authority as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

% Attendance Defined

100% over 3 terms	Outstanding
100%	Excellent
96 – 99.9%	Good
93 – 95.99%	Room for improvement
90.1 – 92.99%	Danger zone
90% & Below	Serious cause for concern - ESW intervention

9. The granting of leave rests with the Director of Student Services. Family holidays will not be authorised unless there is evidence that students are unable to go on holiday at any other time due to restrictions placed upon parental leave. Evidence will be requested. Permission for taking a student out of school can only be given by the Director of Student Services. Parents must complete a leave of absence form, available on line, and return it to the Administrator to Student Services, Mrs Olwen Walsh. Leave of absence will only be given subject to a student's attendance record and the circumstances of the request.
10. Requests for absence must be submitted on the appropriate form available on the school website and completed at least two weeks in advance of the leave when possible. The 'Request for Absence' form outlines the decision making process applied to leave requests.
11. Students needing to leave the site during the day for medical and other appointments should present the request to the Administration Office who will issue a slip to be presented at reception on leaving the site and carried to the appointment.

Authorised/Unauthorised absence

Under Section 7 of the Education Act of 1996 parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a full time education. Since March 2001 it is a further offence for a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly, fails without reasonable justification to cause him or her to attend.

The law requires all schools to indicate in their attendance register whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence means that the school has given approval in advance or the explanation has been accepted as satisfactory (Education Regulations 1995).

Only the school can approve absence

Authorised absence

- a) Absence is authorised by LAW if:
 - i) Attendance is prevented due to sickness or any other unavoidable cause.
 - ii) Religious observance.
 - iii) Lack of suitable transport and the school is not within walking distance.
 - iv) Performance licenses by the LEA.

- b) Situation where authorisation might reasonably be given:
 - i) Domestic circumstances such as bereavement or house fire. These would usually be deemed exceptional circumstances.
 - ii) Exclusion for a fixed period.
 - iii) Attending interviews, e.g. another educational establishment.
 - iv) Medical appointments.
 - v) Approved sporting activity.
 - vi) Study leave.
 - vii) Educational visits.
 - viii) Work experience.
 - ix) Holidays when parents are unable to take leave due to restriction placed upon them by their employer- evidence will be required.

Unauthorised absence

- a) Truancy – absence without parents’ knowledge and approval. This includes those who leave the site after being registered.
- b) Condoned absence – students who are kept home for shopping, baby-sitting etc. – regardless of an explanation being given by a parent. ILLNESS of a PARENT cannot, in normal circumstances, be accepted as a valid reason for a student to be absent.
A note giving explanations for absence does not authorise the absence. The responsibility to authorise lies with the school)
- c) Lateness –if a pupil arrives after this time he/ she would be marked as an unauthorised absence if the reason were not accepted.
- d) Extended visits – The length of absence needs to be determined where possible. The absence should be marked TOR on the first day to indicate “temporarily off register” but still on roll. Failure to return after the arranged date should be followed up with enquiries. If the absence continues arrangements may be made to remove the student from the roll.

All absences must be supported by a written note or email from a parent or responsible adult. Any failure to present such communication will be followed up by the Director of Student Service’s Office. All such notes need to be retained by the Pastoral Office in pupil files.

Procedures

Form tutor/school action on attendance

The role of the form tutor is crucial in recording the absences and their significance. They are the first stage in the recognition and recording of concern. Parents need to be encouraged to make contact as soon as possible, not only as to absences but also with regard to other possible causes for concern. Students need to have good attendance reinforced with positive messages. Procedures should be made clear to them.

- Subject tutors should also be vigilant as to absences from their lessons.
- Concerns as to absence need to be communicated to the Heads of Year.
- Learning Mentor support is available for students who are failing to maintain above 90% attendance
- If the efforts of the school are not effective and regular attendance is not achieved, formal referral must be made to the Education Social Welfare Service.

Interpretation of Data

Form tutors should look for unexplained absences and patterns of absence, e.g.

- Regular absences on the same day
- Frequent absences for short periods
- Pupils absent for more than 3 days in any 4 weeks
- Any group absences
- Frequent lateness
- Regular lateness
- Regular absence from morning/afternoon sessions
- Sudden onset of absences
- Frequent illness
- Frequent absence with permission

Review

The Senior Leadership Team will keep attendance regularly under review and report to the Governors' Curriculum Committee once a term on the attendance figures and any particular problems.