



**CASTLEFORD
PARK JUNIOR ACADEMY**

Attendance Policy

2018 - 2020

Castleford Park Junior Academy

Review Date : May 2020



Attendance Policy 2018-2020

AIM

There is a direct correlation between Attendance and Attainment. The aim of the Attendance Policy is to raise levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils at Park Junior Academy, therefore maximising their opportunities for improved attainment.

OBJECTIVES

- Reduce absence and lateness, and raise awareness of the importance of school attendance.
- Include all school staff, parents, pupils and Governors in 'School Attendance Matters' strategies.
- Develop a robust electronic data handling system, enabling school staff, the LA and DfE to access statistical data in order to work effectively in partnership.
- Work effectively with parents/carers and partner agencies, using a range of strategies to improve the attendance of individual pupils and the whole school.

THE LAW

The 2004 Education Act states that all children are required to receive a suitable education, either at school or otherwise.

When parents have registered their child at school, the law expects them to ensure that the child attends regularly. If the local authority believes that the child is not being educated properly, the Education Welfare Service will address in conjunction with the school using various strategies which may include legal proceedings.

These are:

- Parental prosecution, which will involve the parent/carers appearing in the Magistrates Court
- Fixed Penalty Notice, which is a fine issued instead of a full parental prosecution
- Education Supervision Order (ESO), which will involve the young person appearing in the family court

Legal measures will be considered carefully and discussed with the parent/carer either at a planning meeting, during the Fast Track process, or through written warning.

The 'Fast Track' process involves the Education Welfare Officer meeting with a parent, in partnership with school, to put a plan in place to improve attendance for a child who is at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Parents may be prosecuted for not sending their child to school under the 1996 Education Act. A parental prosecution will be used as a last resort once a school and the Education Welfare Service have tried to work with a family to increase a child's attendance.

A prosecution may involve the parent appearing in the Magistrates Court and may result in a Community Order, a fine of up to £2500, or a custodial sentence.

Anyone with parental responsibility for a child can be prosecuted for non-attendance at school whether the child lives with them or not.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Any absence from school is detrimental to a child's education and progress. It disrupts learning, routines and progress. Government research shows that 17 days lost learning in one school year can lead to a drop of one grade at GCSE and SAT level.

School will follow up unexplained absences by contacting parents/carers on the first day of absence. Parents/carers may be invited into school to discuss attendance issues with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team if there is a cause for concern. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will agree with the EWS at what point a referral to the Service will be made.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Some absences are unavoidable, usually due to illness, bereavement or difficult family circumstances. These absences should be supported by medical evidence where possible or a written explanation from the parent/carer addressed to the Headteacher. The decision as to whether an absence is authorised or not lies with the Headteacher. In some instances an absence that exceeds 5 days or more will be treated as unauthorised.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

These are absences which are not permissible in Law, eg birthdays, shopping trips, days out and **Term Time Holidays**, and absences where no explanation has been received. The School will discuss unauthorised absence with the EWS and further action may be agreed.

The School **does not** authorise holidays taken in term time and works in partnership with the EWS regarding the issue of Fixed Penalty Fines. Pupils have an entitlement to an education, not a term time holiday.

PERSISTENTLY ABSENT PUPILS

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee if he/she has missed 10% or more of school for any reason and has an attendance of below 90%. The Headteacher will invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation, and referrals may be made to the EWS.

PUNCTUALITY

The Law states that children should arrive at school on time, every day. School opens at **8:50am** and the expectation is that pupils should be there ready to learn for that time. Poor punctuality is unacceptable and persistent lateness, ie after the close of registration at **9:05am** will be marked as unauthorised absence, leaving parents/carers at risk of legal action.

ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES

SCHOOL

- Sets high expectations for pupil attendance, and monitors individual and whole school attendance and repeated late pupils on a weekly basis.
- Identifies causes of concern with regard to pupil attendance.
- Makes initial contact with parents/carers where there is unexplained absence.
- Invites parents/carers into school to discuss - where there is no improvement.
- Works in partnership with the LA, and with EWS particularly.
- Notifies the LA if a child has been absent for 10 days or more without contact from parents or carers or if their names is to be taken off the attendance register
 - See Children Missing in Education Policy for further details of how we do this
- Maintains electronic registration data systems effectively and deploys them robustly to facilitate presentation of reports.
- Provides attendance data for parents.
- Promotes attendance at all levels – within school, the community, the LA, regionally and nationally.
- Celebrates excellent and improved attendance

PARENTS/CARERS MUST:

- Ensure pupils arrive at school on time every day and that routines are in place at home to support this.
- Contact the school as soon as possible if absence is unavoidable, and follow this up with a written explanation.
- Obtain evidence, where possible, to support medical absence.
- Avoid term time holidays, and attempt to minimise school time appointments.

PUPILS MUST

- Arrive at school on time, every day, with correct equipment and ready to learn.
- Comply with school regulations regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Discuss any concerns they may have with staff regarding attendance and punctuality.

EWS/LA

- The EWS will work in partnership with the school to promote and facilitate improved attendance, at an individual level, either through a referral system or using the Fast Track to Attendance Programme; and at whole school level using proactive strategies and Action Plans.
- The EWS will work with children and families to ensure their school attendance and safeguarding is maintained.
- EWS will provide advice and guidance with regards to Children Missing Education. Child Employment and Licensing.
- EWS will work in partnership with other agencies and will offer advice and signposting for referrals to appropriate organisations.
- EWS will undertake legal action on behalf of the School.
- The LA will support the school with networking and training events and with individual School Audits and Action Plans.

Reviewed May 2018

Appendices:

- 1) Leaflet sent to parents to explain why we monitor lateness and absence
- 2) Letters sent to parents to notify of problems with attendance
- 3) Reminder of why it is important children attend school – sent to, or discussed with parents where appropriate

Monitoring of attendance, absence and lates

Dear Parents, we take safeguarding our pupils and the community we are part of very seriously. This is why we follow strict procedures for monitoring attendance and absence.

It is our job to support you and your children wherever possible and part of this responsibility is to ensure that they are at school as much as possible. When we ring you to discuss attendance, or absence, we are checking whether there is any way that school can help you –as a family– further and if we are doing everything that we can to ensure your child has the best possible start in life. Being late, or absent from school can be a first indicator that a family needs further help or support.

Please bear this in mind when we phone, or send a letter. Our intention is to help. We feel this is a very important part of our duty to you and your children.

Kind Regards, The Staff at Castleford Park Junior Academy.

Letter regarding lateness

PARENT NAME AND ADDRESS

DATE

Dear _____,

Re: Persistent Lateness

I am writing to inform you that ____ is persistently late for school. Between ____ and ____ he/she was late on 3 occasions.

When pupils arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson and vital short lessons that start the day including arithmetic and reading practice. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Your child may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled. They do not have the same opportunity to check in with the teacher before lessons begin.

Further lateness may result in an arranged meeting being requested in order to help remedy any possible problems.

Meanwhile, if anything can be done to support ____ getting to school on time please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Donna Foster
Mentor

Letter 1 regarding absence

DATE

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to let you know that your child's attendance has fallen below the expected standard.

Attendance at school is a statutory requirement and students are expected to have a 'good' standard of attendance. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school and we would like to support you in doing this.

_____ has been absent on ____ occasions. _____'s attendance is currently __%, which is slightly below a 'good' standard of attendance (above 95%). I have enclosed a print out of _____'s attendance record for your information and the absences have been highlighted.

We want your child to achieve their potential and as well as good attendance being a statutory obligation, there is clear evidence of a link between declining attendance and a drop in academic performance in school.

We do however recognise that sometimes absence cannot be avoided e.g. through genuine illness, so we wanted to make contact early to discuss any attendance issues and work with you to improve them.

Should you require any further support in ensuring your child's attendance improves please contact Donna Foster – Learning Mentor - on 01977 518959.

Yours faithfully



Headteacher

Letter 2 regarding absence

DATE

Dear Parent/Carer

Your attention has already been drawn to _____'s declining attendance at Castleford Academy.

Attendance at school is a statutory requirement and students are expected to have a 'good' standard of attendance.

There is a need for _____ to improve his/her attendance. At present, your child has missed ____ sessions which is an attendance of ____%. This will have a significant impact on your child's achievement. For your information please find enclosed a copy of your child's Attendance Certificate.

Any absence or lateness is known to adversely affect a child's achievement. It is important that students attend school regularly in order to benefit from the educational opportunities provided for them.

_____ will be placed on an attendance monitoring card and meet with me on a daily basis to have the card signed and discuss any attendance issues. If your child is ill, please contact the Academy.

Prolonged absences from school for such illnesses as coughs, colds, headaches and stomach upsets would not necessarily be authorised as these could be managed within the Academy with appropriate medication.

May I take this opportunity to remind you that it is your responsibility to ensure _____ attends school and arrives on time every day.

Should you require any further support in ensuring your child's attendance improves please contact Donna Foster – Learning Mentor- on 01977 518959.

Yours faithfully



Headteacher

Letter 3 regarding absence

DATE

Dear Parent/Carer

Your attention has already been drawn to _____'s unsatisfactory attendance at Castleford Academy.

Attendance at school is a statutory requirement and students are expected to have a 'good' standard of attendance (above 95%). It is your responsibility to ensure that _____ attends school and arrives on time.

Despite previous correspondence and interventions there has been no improvement and your child has missed _____ days, their attendance is now _____%. This is an unacceptable level.

Your child is at risk of becoming a "persistently absent" pupil – this is when a student's attendance falls below 85%. This could lead to the Academy seeking appropriate legal action to ensure your child's attendance improves. Such action could involve an appearance at the Magistrates Court and the possibility of receiving a Parenting Order or a fine of up to £2,500 for each parent/carer. To avoid this it is important that your child attends school every day.

Please be aware that prolonged absences from school for such illnesses as coughs, colds, headaches and stomach upsets would not necessarily be authorised as these could be managed within the Academy with appropriate medication.

You will now need to contact the school office to arrange a meeting to discuss this further with me.

If your child's attendance does not improve and you fail to make an appointment, this may result in a Governors Attendance Panel meeting being called to discuss the attendance issues and decide appropriate actions.

If you require any further support in ensuring your child's attendance improves please contact Donna Foster – Learning Mentor- on 01977 605060.

Yours faithfully



Headteacher

Appendix Three -Discussion tool for use with parents

At Castleford Park Junior Academy, we aim to work hard with parents to ensure children can attend school as often as possible as, where there is persistent absence, they are missing vital parts of their learning. Every lost day is a day where they could have spent time being read with, working on their mental maths, mastering a new skill that could become a future passion, enjoying time with their friends.

Even missing one week is 20 hours of lost learning that have to be caught up in order for your child to reach their potential.

What is good attendance?

Descriptor	Threshold Attendance	Actual Attendance	Whole Days Absent	Learning Hours Lost
Excellent	100%	190 days	0	0
	99%	188 days	2	10
Good	98%	186 days	4	20
School Target	97%	184 days	6	30
	96%	182.5 days	7.5	37.5
	95%	180.5 days	9.5	47.5
Cause for Concern	90%	171 days	19	95
	89%	169 days	21	105
	88%	167 days	23	115
	87%	165 days	25	125
	86%	163 days	27	135
Serious Cause for Concern	85%	161.5 days	28.5	142.5
	84%	159.5 days	30.5	142.5
	83%	158 days	32	160
	82%	156 days	34	170
	81%	154 days	36	180
Critical	80%	152 days	38	190

Monitoring and Review:

Reviewed May 2018

Next Review May 2020

Signed  _____

Date: May 2018

Miss K. Law Headteacher

Signed _____

Date: May 2018

Mr J Dossey Chair of Governors