



ATTENDANCE AND INCLUSION POLICY

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1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The law states that all children must receive a full-time education from five to sixteen years of age.
- 1.2 We are very proud of the excellent attendance level achieved by our pupils.
- 1.3 Pupils who attend regularly tend to make excellent progress. This, of course, is due to the co-operation of parents and guardians who keep absence to an absolute minimum.

- 1.4 We work with outside agencies, including Rutland's Inclusion Officer, who may become involved in your child's attendance.
- 1.5 This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance: parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [Part 6 of The Education Act 1996](#)
- [Part 3 of The Education Act 2002](#)
- [Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2. REPORTING PUPIL ABSENCE:

- On each day of absence, a parent/guardian must contact the School to explain the reason; this can be done via email to: office@catmoseprimary.com or by using the Xpressions app. If we have not received contact from the parent/guardian we will make contact by telephone to ensure that a parent/guardian is aware of the child's absence.
- If we have no confirmation of the reason for the child's absence, a member of staff may take further measures such as carrying out a Welfare Visit at the child's home address, notifying the police or notifying other external agencies. We will always prioritise any follow up actions for those pupils who we know to be vulnerable. If we receive no communication within 48 hours as to the child's whereabouts we will contact the police and/or social care.
- When a pupil returns to School there must be an absence note handed in, signed and dated, unless an email has been sent. The written note is always required unless an email has been received.
- If after 48 hours there is still no explanation, a letter will be sent home.
- If there is still no response to the School's letter, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

3. MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

- 3.1 Pupil attendance will be included on school reports. During the school year parents will receive a full attendance report for their child.
- 3.2 Parents of any pupil who have provided no reasons for an absence, coded N, will also receive a letter requesting an explanation. It may be that there are perfectly valid reasons for such an attendance level. However, this may be an opportunity for parents/guardians to raise any issues that may be affecting their child at School.
- 3.3 If a pupil has been absent regularly due to illness, the School may ask for supporting evidence of a medical need e.g. appointment card, photograph of medication or confirmation of medical appointment. These will only be valid for six weeks from the date of issue and the School should be kept up-to-date of ongoing medical needs. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.
- 3.4 Medical or Dental appointments
Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice to the School is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- 3.5 Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 8.
- 3.6 Lateness and punctuality
- A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
 - A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. Further information can be found within section 13.
- 3.7 A scorecard which contains information on absence and persistent absence (across year groups and groups of pupils) will be shared with the governing body on a termly basis.

4. ACADEMY AND EDUCATION INCLUSION SERVICE

- 4.1 The Early Help and Inclusion Officer at Rutland County Council will be made aware of any pupil whose attendance has fallen below 92%.
- 4.2 An appropriate member of staff will monitor the pupil's attendance closely and targets will be set to improve attendance.

4.3 The School collects and stores the attendance data on a management information system. This data is used for internal purposes. For example:

- To track the attendance of individual pupils or groups of pupils.
- To identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be of a cause for concern.
- Monitor and evaluate those pupils identified as needing intervention and support.

4.4 If a student is absent due to medical reasons for a period of more than 15 days in one term, a referral will be made to the local authority for medical tuition to be put in place.

5. BELOW 92% ATTENDANCE – PERSISTENT ABSENCE

5.1 It is the legal responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that their child attends School regularly. Permitting absence from School without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Poor attendance could also be considered a safeguarding matter and lead to a referral being made to social care.

5.2 If a pupil's attendance falls below 92%, the Attendance and Inclusion Service will be informed and the situation monitored.

6. LETTERS AND ESCALATION

Stage 1 – Class Teacher Support

Should a class teacher feel that there is a concern about the attendance of a pupil, a letter will be sent home to highlight this and offer parents support in improving attendance. At this point, class teachers will also discuss the importance of good attendance with their pupil and support them with any of their own concerns. A regular check in with the class teacher may take place.

Stage 2 - Medical Evidence Request

A medical evidence request letter will be sent when:

- A pupil has been absent for a period of 5 consecutive days
- A pupil has reached a 92% attendance rate.

Where a pupil's attendance is below 92%, a key worker will be assigned to monitor attendance and offer further support to parents and the pupil. The key worker will meet

regularly with the pupil to support the pupil in School with any concerns that might affect their attendance.

Medical evidence will be required for **all absences** in the form of a GP or hospital letter, a photograph of any medication prescribed (including the date) or a copy of an appointment card. Further evidence may be requested at the discretion of the School attendance team.

Stage 3 - Four Week Monitoring Period

A pupil will be placed on a four-week monitoring period when:

- Medical evidence has not been provided for absences.
- A pupil's attendance remains below 92% and there is not a sustained improvement despite support from the School.
- There has been little engagement with the support offered by the pupil or parent.

A letter will be sent which outlines the dates over which this monitoring will take place. We will liaise with parents to discuss concerns over attendance and offer further support strategies where appropriate. Where attendance does not show a sustained improvement over this monitoring period, parents will be invited to a School or Local Authority Attendance Panel.

Stage 4 - Fast Track to Prosecution

A Fast Track to Prosecution meeting may be held at the discretion of the Local Authority Early Help and Inclusion Support Officer. In this meeting an action plan will be created to support improved attendance at School. A review will take place after 6 weeks where a decision will be made by the Local Authority whether to refer parents for prosecution. A senior leader, such as the Head of School, will be assigned to a Stage 4 attendance case.

6.1 The School will also implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance such as:

- Allocated key worker
- Pastoral Support Plan
- Attendance report
- Referrals to outside agencies
- Pupil voice activities
- Time limited part-time timetable
- Parenting Contracting
- Social groups
- Reintegration strategies

- 6.2 Parents/guardians will be invited to a School and/or Local Authority Attendance Panel in order to explain and resolve the pupil's low attendance. If appropriate, an Attendance Action Plan will be produced.
- 6.3 The Attendance and Inclusion Service may also be compelled to place the parent/guardian at Stage 1 of the Local Authority's Prosecution Procedure. An immediate attendance target will be set to avoid prosecution under [Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act](#).
- 6.4 Failure to meet the Local Authority's target will result in further formal proceedings and possibly a fixed penalty notice being issued or court action. Failure to ensure a child's attendance is an offence under the above act.
- 6.5 If the Head of School has not authorised the absence, then the Local Authority may take legal proceedings. This may result in:
- A Penalty Notice requiring payment of a penalty of up to £120 per parent per child. Failure to pay the penalty will result in prosecution before a Magistrates Court.
 - Prosecution under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted, a parent/guardian may be fined up to £1,000.
 - Prosecution under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 where if convicted a parent/guardian may be fined up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence.
 - Please note that you may not be issued with a Penalty Notice as the Local Authority may decide that it is appropriate to prosecute you without first offering an alternative.
- 6.6 If the child has taken other unauthorised absences in the same academic year and has previously been issued with a penalty notice, or, if the child has taken unauthorised absences when general attendance is poor, then it is likely that the Local Authority would refer the case directly for prosecution without issuing a further penalty notice.
- 6.7 Parents should be aware that aggravated non-attendance (where parents have already received a penalty notice) will be recorded on the Police National Computer and will be declared on any DBS checks carried out.

7. ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE

- 7.1 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason such as:
- My child is too ill to leave the house
 - My child has a hospital appointment which cannot be arranged outside of School hours
 - My child has toothache and has an emergency appointment
 - To attend the funeral of a relative
 - To attend a significant event involving education, music or sport

8. UNACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR ABSENCE

8.1 Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been authorised. This includes:

- To look after other family members
- Sleeping in
- To avoid being late
- Another child is ill, so all are kept off
- Minor ailments such as tummy ache or headache
- End of term
- To mind the house or take a delivery
- Holiday during term time.

This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

9. WELFARE VISITS

9.1 Staff may conduct a home visit when:

- a pupil is absent from school without a valid reason, and
- the school hasn't received a reply to a follow-up call **or**
- the school has received a reply that they're concerned about
- the school has concern that the pupil has not been seen since the return of a holiday period or by another professional
- the pupil is in receipt of Medical Needs Tuition

10. TERM-TIME ABSENCE

10.1 As per the Pupil Registration Regulation legislation (September 2013), we are only able to authorise time off from School in exceptional, once-in-a-lifetime circumstance. Any applications must be received in writing at least 10 working days in advance. The School cannot authorise absence requests on the basis of cost, nor can the School authorise a known absence retrospectively.

10.2 The School considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head of School's discretion.

11. CHILDREN WHO DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL DUE TO MEDICAL REASONS

11.1 We recognise that there will be times when pupils need to be absent due to illness. When a pupil is too unwell to attend for a few days we do not routinely provide work. However, we do recognise that there are some exceptional circumstances, for example

following an operation, when a pupil may be diagnosed as too unwell to be in School but well enough to complete work at home for a short period of time. During this period, the School will aim to provide work to match that which is covered within the lessons. However, this should only be for a short period of time, because without specialist teacher input pupils inevitably progress at a different rate to their peers. Once an absence extends for more than a few lessons, it becomes increasingly difficult to plan and assess work, as well as provide effective feedback.

11.2 If you believe your child will be too ill to attend School for a longer period of time, please:

- Contact the School at your earliest convenience to explain the nature of the illness.
- Provide medical evidence to the School in the form of a GP or hospital note.
- Refer to the Federation Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

12. CELEBRATING AND REWARDING GOOD ATTENDANCE

12.1 It is important to recognise and reward the vast majority of our pupils who have consistently outstanding attendance. The School does this through awarding certificates and house points to pupils with outstanding attendance.

13. LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

13.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Pupils who arrive late miss work, have reduced contact time with teachers, disrupt the learning of other pupils and can suffer embarrassment.

13.2 The School opens at 7:50am with breakfast club provision, and by 8.50am all pupils should be in lessons and ready to commence their learning.

13.3 Morning registers are taken and marked by the teachers. Pupils will receive a late mark if they arrive after this has taken place.

13.4 Pupils who are persistently late will be referred to the Local Authority.

13.5 At 9.30am the morning registers are closed. In accordance with government guidance, if a pupil arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.



14. AUTHORISED ABSENCES FOR TERM-TIME ABSENCE

Dear Parent/Guardian

Absences adversely affect the progress that pupils make. One of the most important things you can do for your child is make sure that they attend school regularly and on time. It is only me, as the Head of School, that can authorise an absence.

By law, we are only able to authorise time off for an exceptional, once-in-a-lifetime circumstance. Any applications must be received in writing in advance. The School cannot authorise absence requests on the basis of cost nor can the School authorise a known absence retrospectively.

Unauthorised absence will form part of a pupil's record. It is often difficult for pupils to catch up with work as they miss out on the interaction with the teacher and other pupils.

I must warn you that failure to ensure your child's attendance is an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If the absence is not authorised, then the Local Authority may take legal proceedings against you. This may result in:

- A Penalty Notice requiring payment of a penalty of up to £120 per parent per child. Failure to pay the penalty due will result in prosecution before a Magistrates Court.
- Prosecution under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.
- Prosecution under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence.
- Please note that you may not be issued with a Penalty Notice as the Local Authority may decide that it is appropriate to prosecute you without first offering an alternative.
- Parents should be aware that aggravated non-attendance (where parents have already received a penalty notice) will be recorded on the National Police Computer and will be declared on any DBS checks carried out.

If you wish to take your child out of the School for what you consider an exceptional reason, please complete the form below and return it to me. Please note that we may need to ask for additional evidence to support any request.

Yours faithfully

Kelly Jackson
Head of School



15. APPENDIX 1:
REQUEST FORM FOR ABSENCE DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

I/we request that (name).....in form.....should be granted an authorised absence from (start date).....to (end date)..... This is a total ofSchool days.

I understand that this will result in work being missed and may affect the learning and achievement of my child.

I understand that the School requires at least 10 working days’ notice of any planned absence and may need to ask for additional information before being able to process a request.

The reason for the absence is:
.....
.....
.....
.....

I confirm that I am aware of the School policy and it is not possible to avoid this absence by using school holidays. I understand that this absence cannot be authorised unless it is deemed to be exceptional or a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Signature of Parent/Guardian:..... Date:.....

16. APPENDIX 2: ATTENDANCE CODES

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason. (This code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time.)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day