

## Attendance and Absence Policy

Authorised by:	The Board of Governors of CFBL
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### Introduction

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. Parents/carers (hereafter "**Parents**") have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. It is the responsibility of local councils' education departments to ensure that Parents meet these responsibilities.

The school follows DfE advice [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) of May 2022.

#### 1. The importance of high attendance:

Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and is therefore seen as everyone's responsibility in School. Children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

Securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation. Barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Removing barriers to attendance requires building strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents and working together to put the right support in place. Effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, but is a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the governing body, the local authority and other local partners. Annex A sets out how all partners should work together.

The School has a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across its community. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset.

The School recognises the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions or disabilities, safeguarding, wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged students. Attendance is central to the School's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life.

The School promotes the benefits of high attendance for all pupils by reminding the pupils that failing to attend school

regularly can have a major impact on their education, their future and their life chances. High attendance is key to developing relationships with peers and feeling of belonging.

In applying this policy, the School will consider the specific needs of certain pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance and consider its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Mr Gassian, the Headteacher, Ms Lacassagne, the Deputy Head to the Primary and Mr Saillard, the Deputy Head to the Secondary, who are also DSLs, have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

They ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.

More detailed support on attendance can be obtained from the Deputy Head to the Primary and the Deputy Head to the Secondary.

Attendance will be regularly reviewed in the safeguarding committee and by the board of governors.

## **2. Registers**

The Headteacher is required to maintain two registers:

- an admission register (also known as the School roll or pupils register) which contains a list of all the pupils registered at the School, with their personal details including without limitation the date of admission, information regarding Parents (or carers) and details of the school last attended (if applicable); and
- an attendance register (which records pupils' attendance on school days).

All pupils are placed on both registers.

### **2.1 The admissions register**

CFBL's Admissions Register & School Transfers policy describes the School's responsibilities and procedures with respect to the admissions register and the School's reporting obligations to the local authority. This policy is available on the School's website and upon request.

### **2.2 The attendance register**

An attendance register for all pupils on the School roll is taken twice a day in the Primary School (once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session) and at the beginning of each lesson in the Secondary School.

In the Primary School, the class teachers keep an electronic attendance register for their class. In the Secondary School, the *Responsable de Vie Scolaire* and teachers are responsible for recording attendance. Both the classroom teachers and the *Responsable de Vie Scolaire* report directly to the Deputy to the Head.

For each pupil, the register must be marked as:

- present,
- engaged in an approved educational activity away from the School site,
- absent, or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

If the pupil is absent, the School will follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census

The register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the School.

Attendance to Clubs, Garderie and Klubhouse: CFBL Clubs keeps an electronic register of attendance to Clubs/Garderie/Klubhouse.

For each pupil registered to Clubs/Garderie/Klubhouse, this register must be marked as present or absent at each individual session. Reception communicates each afternoon to CFBL Clubs a printed copy of pupils present or absent, to allow CFBL Clubs to check absences before the start of Clubs/Garderie/Klubhouse. If a pupil is absent without explanation, the Clubs Manager will phone the Parents for an explanation as soon as practicable after taking the attendance register. In the event that CFBL Clubs is not able to reach either parent, they will contact them by email and request a written justification.

For drop-off *Garderie* services where pupils are not systematically registered in advance, the name of those pupils not pre registered to *Garderie* will be added to the register.

**Expected first day of attendance:** Schools must enter pupils on the attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the School. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

**Amendments to the Attendance Register:** Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

**Preservation of the Attendance Register:** Every entry in the attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

### 2.3 Children at Risk of Missing Education

The School's safeguarding responses to children missing in education are set out in its 'Missing Child Policy & Procedures When a Child is Not Collected on Time', which are available on the [School's website](#).

## 3. Term dates, absences and lateness

### 3.1 Term dates

The School Calendar and term dates are published on the [School's website](#).

### 3.2 Authorised and unauthorised absences; lateness

3.2.1 An authorised absence is one for which the School has either given approval in advance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Examples of authorised absences are: sickness, medical or dental appointments, the taking part in a day of religious observance, family bereavement or other exceptional family event.

In case of absence, Parents must notify the School as soon as possible:

- For the Primary School: send email to [info@cfbl.org.uk](mailto:info@cfbl.org.uk)
- For the Secondary School: send email to [viescolaire@cfbl.org.uk](mailto:viescolaire@cfbl.org.uk)

3.2.2 The School decides whether it is satisfied with the reasons for the absence and if an absence is authorised or not. All absences not authorised by the School will be treated as unauthorised absences. These include unexplained or unjustified absences.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from

school.

### 3.2.3 Illness

Parents need to notify the School on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. The School will authorise an absence due to illness unless it has a genuine concern about the veracity of the illness. The School can, at its discretion, require Parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Medical evidence can include the form of prescriptions, appointment cards as well as a doctor's certificate.

### 3.2.4 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical appointment will be counted as authorised absence. The School may require Parents to provide the appointment card. Parents are encouraged to make appointments outside school hours. When it is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

### 3.2.5 Holidays

The School applies the current [Government's guidance](#) on the reporting of absences for holidays taken during term time to the local authority. The Headteacher will not approve of holidays taken by pupils during term time except for exceptional circumstances - and such absence which will be noted as unauthorised in the attendance register and the number of unauthorised absences will be noted in the pupil's records.

### 3.2.6 Lateness

Registers are opened for 15 minutes from the start of morning and afternoon classes. Pupils must not be marked present if they are not at the School during registration.

If a pupil leaves the School after registration, they are counted as present for statistical purposes.

3.3 The School supports pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provides support to build confidence and bridge gaps. This is done by contacting the parents and/or the students to make sure they have access to lessons, activities and homework. When the pupils are back in school, the Deputy Head or the form tutor organises a meeting with parents and teachers to provide support (in school or at home according to the needs), advice and guidelines.

## **4. Responsibilities of Parents**

If a child is 5 years old or more, it is the responsibility of their parents to provide an education.

If a child is registered at the School and does not attend regularly, the School will work closely with the parents to resolve the problem.

Unauthorised absences from School carry the risk of prosecution. Under the (Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/181), as amended by the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, Parents found guilty of school attendance offences could be subject to a fixed penalty by Camden LA. DfE guidance on [Children Missing Education of September 2016](#) contains provisions on schools sharing of information with the local authority (please also refer to CFBL Missing Child Policy).

Parents have a right to educate their child outside the school system. However, the School will not seek to persuade Parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding a pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record.

## **5. School's obligations**

It is the duty of the School to monitor and control school attendance and report truancy and if a child is missing from education to the local authority (refer to Missing Child Policy for further details).

CFBL expects Parents to contact the School when their child is absent to explain the reason on the first day of absence.

If a pupil is absent without explanation, the School staff will phone the Parents for an explanation as soon as practicable after taking the attendance register. In the event that the School is not able to reach either parent the School will contact them by email and request a written justification.

If absence continues without explanation, further contact will be made to ensure safeguarding.

The *Responsable de Vie Scolaire* or the Deputy to the Headteacher will contact the Parents of a child whose records show regular unauthorised absence or lateness, to discuss attendance and engagement at school. In communicating with Parents, the School may discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.

If any of the Headteacher or the Deputies are concerned about continuous non-attendance or about a pattern of absences becoming problematic, they will refer the identified pupil to services and organisations that can provide said support or to the local authority's School Attendance Support Team, as quickly as possible.

**Recording absence figures and data monitoring:** Each year, the School is required through the Schools Census System to submit to the DfE details of its level of absence. It is also required to state how many half days were missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence.

In addition, the School keeps track of attendance ratio and uses it among other KPIs to assess the school performance.

The School will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This should go beyond headline attendance percentages and should look at individual pupils, cohorts and groups (including their punctuality) across the school to help schools achieve their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Look into patterns of attendance within a session to ensure all pupils are attending all timetabled lessons.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers or tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators and designated safeguarding leads).
- Identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This will include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings will then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Ask the board of governors to regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

**Regular information of Parents:** Parents have access to their child's attendance and absence levels through Pronote, which provides lateness, the number of days of absence and the reason for absence provided. The *Vie Scolaire* team calls the parents if they haven't provided a reason for the absence. In case the amount of time missed has a negative impact on the pupil's learning, the Deputy Head or the form tutor will organise a meeting with the parents.

**Information sharing:** Local authorities and schools (of all types) are expected to have a regular Targeting Support Meetings at least termly. Further, to facilitate timely collaborative working across partners, all schools are also legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority.

As a minimum this includes:

- Every time a pupil's name is to be added to, or deleted from, the school admission register outside of standard transition times (including the statutory reason for deletion). For deletions this must take place before the deletion, and for additions it must be no later than 5 working days after the addition.
- The name and address of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for 10 days or more without the absence being recorded as authorised.

Local authorities should agree the frequency this must be shared with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month.

## 6. School's strategy

The School will ensure that data is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include: identifying the individual needs of pupils; working

closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where necessary a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority in line with the DfE guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2022).

In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues. We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, and we will work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reduced timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period to support pupils to reintegrate back into education to access full time provision.

The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

The Board of Governors will:

- Regularly review attendance data at board meetings. This should include thorough examination of recent and historic trends at a school level as well as benchmarking to comparator schools within the local authority area, region and nationwide.
- Pay particular attention to attendance of pupil cohorts within their school(s) that have historically had poor attendance or that face entrenched barriers to attendance. This should be specific to the school's context, but may include pupils who have a social worker, are from a background or ethnicity where attendance has historically been low, have a long-term medical condition, special educational needs or a disability, or are eligible for free school meals.
- Work with the School's SLT to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those focus areas.

## **7. Staff training on attendance**

Training on attendance is included in the school's continued professional development offer for all staff, and attendance will be covered in the induction packs. This will include all staff understanding:

- o the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- o the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers,
- o the school' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance, and
- o the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

Dedicated attendance training is provided to any staff with a specified attendance function in their role. This include:

- o the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data, and
- o any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Members of the Vie scolaire team such as AEDs, are trained to use Pronote.

## **8. General**

This document has been drawn up under Part 3 (15) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2014 which requires that "admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) by the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, the May 2022 DfE guidance on Working together to improve school attendance and the September 2016 DfE guidance on the sharing of information with the LA on Children Missing from Education."

Last review by management: November 2023

**RELATED POLICIES**

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Admissions Register & School Transfers Policy
- Missing Child Policy & Procedures When a Child is Not Collected on Time
- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Staff Behaviour Policy
- Policy for Induction of New Staff, Governors and Volunteers in Child Protection

## Annex A – Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

