

# Attendance policy

## Corrie Nursery and Primary School



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### 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance and punctuality by:

**Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence**

**Promoting good punctuality.**

**Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled**

**Acting early to address patterns of absence**

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [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.

### **3. School procedures**

#### **3.1 Attendance register**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

**Present**

**Attending an approved off-site educational activity**

**Absent**

**Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

**The original entry**

**The amended entry**

**The reason for the amendment**

**The date on which the amendment was made**

**The name and position of the person who made the amendment**

See appendix 1 for the DFE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Our school doors are opened at 8.50am each morning. The doors then close at 9.00am and the register will be taken. Any child not present for the morning register will be marked as absent. The register is kept open until 9.30. If your child arrives between 9.00am and 9.30 am they will be given a late mark. If your child arrives after 9.30 they will be given a U code which means it is an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

#### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). You will then be asked for an expected date of return.

Parents/carers can leave a message on our school answer machine if you are unable to get through to our office staff. You can also send a message via parent mail.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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.

### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice 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.

Once you receive a medical appointment bring the letter or card into school. We will make a photocopy of it and keep it on our records.

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 4.

### **3.4 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.

*If your child has 4 lates or more within a half term period you will be invited into school for a meeting with our Learning Mentor to see if there is any support we can offer to ensure that your child is in school on time every day.*

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If a child is absent and we have not received a reason for absence a phone call will be made to parents/carers to ascertain a reason for absence. If we are unable to speak to a parent/ carer then a home visit by our Learning Mentor in line with our safe guarding policy, may be made.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

Each week class attendance is celebrated in a school assembly and is displayed on school notice boards and displays.

Each term a child's attendance is reported on our assertive mentoring scheme which will be sent home to parents.

Attendance will be discussed by teachers as part of termly parents evenings.

Attendance is also recorded in the end of school yearly report

## 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

**Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3**

**Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart**

**If a child's attendance becomes a concern this is what will happen**

- If your child's attendance drops below 95% you will receive a letter to say that we will no longer be authorising absences without a medical note.
- If your child's attendance drops again and reaches 93% you will be invited into school for a meeting with our Learning Mentors to discuss the reasons for absence and to discuss whether you need additional support.
- If your child's attendance continues to decline then you will be invited into school to attend an Attendance Panel Meeting. At this meeting there will be our Learning Mentor and Education Welfare Officer. At this meeting we will discuss again reasons for absence, any further support that may be needed and an attendance improvement plan will be put in place which will outline what the parent and school are going to do to ensure a child's attendance. This will be monitored every two weeks.
- If attendance still continues to decline we will have no other option but to refer the case to the Education Welfare Service either a Fine or to instigate a prosecution against you for failing to meet your legal requirement of ensuring good attendance for your child.

### 4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

### **Holidays In Term Time**

Headteachers **will not authorise** holidays in term time unless parents are in the armed forces. This is following the guidance set by the local authority.

All parents should complete a **holiday in term time form** so that we know where a child is if they are absent for a period of time.

You will receive a letter for the headteacher stating that your application for a holiday has been declined.

You can choose to take your child out of school during term time but you will be fined by the local authority upon your child's return to school.

If your child is absent for a period of time and you have not applied for a holiday in term time but we believe you are on holiday. You will receive a letter upon your child's return to school stating that we believe, and give you the reasons, that you were on holiday and therefore we are applying for a penalty notice to be issued.

When issued with a penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent.

If you take your child on holiday on two separate occasions (during term time) throughout their whole school career, the local authority will instigate criminal proceedings against you under the Education Act 1996 section 444 for failure to ensure regular attendance for your child

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

### **Attendance Incentives**

- Each week, the class in each key stage with the highest attendance over 97% or above will receive £10.00 attendance reward which they can save and be used for a variety of treats for the whole class for example an end of term party, bouncy castles, trip for the class or new toys for the class.
- Each week the class in each key stage that has no late marks will receive a £10.00 punctuality reward which can be used for a variety of treats for the whole class for example an end of term party, bouncy castles, trip for the class or new toys for the class.
- Every Term each child whose attendance is 97% or above will receive a Head Teachers Award in a special attendance assembly.
- Every Term the children that have improved their attendance the most will

receive a Head Teachers award and a special Attendance Assembly.

- Attendance is also recorded as part of our Assertive Mentoring Scheme. Each child will be given a green, yellow or red mark depending on their attendance that half term. This will be sent home in their reports.
- Attendance is reported on our Corrie Forum each half term.

### ***Support Systems***

School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation or any other difficulties that the family may be experiencing. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

#### **Support strategies**

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include

- Parent meetings with our Learning Mentors
- Home Visits when a child is absent
- Attendance Panel meetings
- Attendance improvement plan
- EHA support
- Referral to other outside agencies for additional support

## **6. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents/carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2) and give an expected date of return.

If a child does not return on the date the parent stated a phone call will be made home to find out the reason for continued absence.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **7.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **7.3 The attendance officer**

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level**

- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher**

- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence**

- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues**

- Implements and supports attendance improvement plans**

- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices**

- Advises the headteacher when we need to refer cases to the local authority for prosecution**

### **7.4 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting this information to the school office.

### **7.5 Office staff**

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Learning Mentor and Head teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

## **Appendix 1: 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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day