



**The Castle School**  
A SPECIALIST COLLEGE FOR COMMUNICATION & INTERACTION

## Attendance Policy

**Status:** statutory

### **Purpose:**

This policy provides a framework and guidance for staff and parents to, promote and support students to have consistently high attendance so that they can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Student learning and personal growth is vital and a priority in this school. The school aspires of high standards of attendance from all students and build a culture where all can and want to be in school. This is achieved through positive relationships, understanding needs and shared values of care and respect.

### **Relationship to other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and Therapeutic Thinking Handbook and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Role and responsibilities of Headteacher, other staff, Governors**

The Headteacher will ensure that

- Students are registered accurately and efficiently twice a day am and pm
- A senior member of staff will monitor attendance data routinely, identify patterns of low attendance and monitor actions taken to support attendance.
- Attendance is viewed within Safeguarding and patterns of low attendance and unauthorised attendance will be identified as a safeguarding concern needing investigation, further support and if necessary referral to other agencies including West Berkshire SEN Team and Children's Services.
- The Pastoral Team have the necessary training to support families with attendance by helping to remove barriers in school, and provide early help and timely support to families.
- School attendance statistics are reported to the LA as required
- Students absent for long periods because of ill health or mental health receive learning materials and support, if appropriate.

Classroom staff are expected to

- Register students accurately using the agreed format
- Report student absence daily if the reason for absence is unknown, this must be recorded as a Safeguarding Concern for DSL to monitor and where appropriate coordinate support
- Raise concerns of low attendance patterns as a Safeguarding concern
- Ensure that consistent attendance is valued and encouraged

The Governing Board will ensure that the LA is informed about the long term absence of any students.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation**

The Headteacher will provide attendance data to Governors in the Headteacher's report if required.

### **Attendance Policy Implementation**

See also Staff Handbook

- Students attendance at the Castle School is seen in the context of the ethos of the school.
- Attendance recording should be completed at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions using SIMS.
- There is strong emphasis on the fostering of positive attitudes to school and the creation of a climate based on mutual trust and support.
- In all cases of absence/non-attendance an explanation should be given by letter, telephone or email. This should be given on the first day of absence.

### **Attendance Policy**

- Parents or carers are contacted on the first day that an absence occurs, if the reason for the absence is unknown
- All unauthorised absences are recorded through Safeguarding on MyConcern.
- Staff should be particularly alert to absences relating to problems which have arisen at school or at home and communicate concerns to the Senior Leadership Team

#### Family Holidays

- Absence for family holidays during term time should be requested on the form available from the office. These forms should be completed by parents before the holiday, signed by the class teacher and given to the Head teacher for authorising. This will be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher.

#### Illness

- Students who are unwell should not be in school. If classroom staff feel that a pupil should be at home because of illness they should seek advice from the Senior Leadership Team or the school nurse and then arrange for the student to be collected by their parents.
- If a student has been suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting they must be kept away from school for 48 hours after the last occurrence.
- For some infectious diseases illnesses there may be a period that a child may need to remain away from school. Please consult with the Headteacher if unsure. Further information on managing specific infectious diseases and how long a child should remain away from school is contained in [Chapter 9: managing specific infectious diseases](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases) on the Public Health England website. You can find this by clicking here or going to the webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases>

When a pattern of low attendance is identified the following steps will be taken:

- This will be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team
- Discussion will be had with families and the student (as appropriate) to listen and understand any barriers to attendance and agree how these can be resolved.
- An Attendance Support Plan will be completed, this will involve the student, the family, the Pastoral Team, the class teacher and overseen by the Senior Leadership. This will be reviewed regularly in a timeframe that is appropriate for the individual situation.
- Where absence continues the school will seek advice from the Education Welfare Service and consider referrals to Children's Services if necessary and communicate with West Berkshire SEN Team.
- The school will engage with outside agencies to support the student and their family

#### Rights Respecting School

This policy adheres to the principles of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) specifically articles: 3, 16, 18, 23, 28, 29 & 31.

**Last reviewed:** Summer 2023  
**Next review date:** Summer 2026