



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, the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Therapeutic Thinking Handbook.

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.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is James Whybra – Deputy Head and can be contacted via 01635 42976

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

School office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All birth parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 09.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school Pastoral Team who can be contacted via the school number 01635 42976

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher will provide attendance data to Governors in the Headteacher's report as 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 the school MIS system.
- 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.

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- 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 student 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](#) 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-childcarefacilities/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: Spring 2026

Next review date: Spring 2027