



CARLTON
ACADEMY TRUST

Carlton Academy Trust Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved on behalf of Trustees:

Gareth Logan

Date:

September 2023

Next Review:

September 2024



Glossary of Terms

AEP:	Alternative Education Provider.
AO:	Attendance Officer.
CME:	Children Missing from Education.
FPN:	Fixed Penalty Notice.
HOS:	Head of School.
LA:	Local Authority.
MIS:	Management Information Systems
MM:	Managed Move.
Parents:	Umbrella term also including parents.
PDC:	Pupil Disciplinary Committee.
PRU:	Pupil Referral Unit.



Section One: Expectations and Routines

Benefits of Regular Attendance

There is a strong link between attendance, educational outcomes, and children being drawn into criminal activities. Strong attendance is facilitated by effective partnership working between schools and parents, with schools acting promptly and proactively to ensure poor attendance and punctuality do not become entrenched problems.

Expectations

All students should aim for 100% attendance.

Attendance below 95% is a cause for concern and parents will be contacted to discuss any support required.

Attendance below 90% is 'Persistent Absence' and is a serious cause for concern and a formal support plan will be developed with parents.

Attendance below 50% is 'Severe Absence' and is a safeguarding concern.

There are circumstances – usually medical (physical and mental health related) - which make it difficult for a student to maintain good attendance. Where this occurs, the school will make reasonable adjustments subject to receipt of documentary evidence.

Students are expected to attend school and lessons on time, making timely and prompt movements to lessons following the completion of another lesson, or after break and lunch. Sanctions will be applied to students who fail to meet these standards. Parents will be notified, with an agreed support plan where required.

Routines

Start of the Day

Students arriving after the official start time will be classed as late. Sanctions will be applied appropriate to their age and level of development, which is normally an automatic same-day after school 1-hour detention in secondary schools.

Registers

Morning and afternoon attendance registers must be taken no later than 10 minutes after the start of the first lesson. Registers are taken for all lessons in secondary schools so that truancy (internal and external) can be effectively monitored throughout the day.

Staff with responsibility for attendance monitor registers throughout the day so that any missing registers or marks are followed up to ensure the school attendance register remains accurate at all times. They also update register marks when they have established the reasons for absence. Parents will be notified of concerns.

There are only limited circumstances where schools can authorise absence, made at the discretion of the Head of School (see Appendix 1).

Absence Notification

Parents must inform school without delay if their child is absent. This can be done by call, text, or email. Full details must be provided, with general explanations such as 'illness' deemed insufficient.



Acceptable evidence of illness absence commonly includes prescriptions and appointment cards. Where there is insufficient evidence, absence may be recorded as unauthorised, with parents informed accordingly.

Absence for the following reasons will be recorded as 'Unauthorised':

- Student or family member's birthday, wedding, or other family celebration.
- Shopping for uniform or school equipment.
- Having a haircut.
- Closure of sibling's school.
- Looking after a family member.
- Attending appointments for other family members i.e., interpreting
- 'Too tired' or "Couldn't get up".
- Minor Illnesses (cough, cold, sore throat, headache) where the child is considered well enough to attend school with medication from a pharmacist.
- Taking too long for medical appointments i.e., full days, except where justified and evidenced.
- Unauthorised leave of absence or holidays.
- Adverse weather – except where the school has closed.
- Where there is a regular pattern of illness or extended illness absence and no medical evidence to support this.

Where reasons for absence are not provided, this would be followed up on the **first day** and all subsequent days by a member of the attendance or pastoral team by phone call or home visit where there are safeguarding concerns. When there are safeguarding concerns, social workers and other professionals where appropriate, will be informed. For all other students, where no reason for absence is established a home visit will take place within three school days to establish the whereabouts of the student.

Attendance Support

Schools must provide support for students who are encountering difficulties with attendance.

When attendance falls below 95%, parents will be notified and where deemed necessary invited in to discuss barriers and any support needed. Students with attendance just over the Persistent Absence threshold will be under particular scrutiny.

When a student becomes a Persistently Absent, the LA will be informed, and a formal support plan agreed and implemented. This will be formally monitored, and where there is no discernible improvement, the LA will issue an FPN.

Where attendance falls below 50% (Severe Absence) the school will continue to support parents and may also make a referral to outside agencies such as the School Nursing Team, CAMHS. Where there are safeguarding concerns, LA Children's Social Care will be notified.



Section Two: Responsibilities and Specific Circumstances

Schools will:

- Maintain accurate attendance registers in accordance with statutory requirements, proactively monitoring these to identify emerging trends, and making effective interventions where identified.
- Consistently communicate attendance expectations to staff and students, facilitating support to all students, including those with SEND, where needed.
- Have a designated senior leader with responsibility for attendance.
- Encourage staff to attend regularly and punctually.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance.
- Regularly communicate attendance to students, setting targets for improvement, support, and intervention where necessary.
- Regularly communicate attendance rates to parents, highlighting when there is cause for concern and working with them to support or remove barriers.
- Provide attendance training to staff appropriate to their role.
- Notify the LA and other relevant parties of any students who have unauthorised absence and there is a safeguarding concern.
- Promptly establish reasons for absence.
- Promptly communicate with parents when attendance is becoming a concern, inviting them to meet to discuss barriers and any support required.
- Set formal targets for improvement when students become 'Persistently Absent'.
- Signpost parents to support from external agencies.
- Effectively support and liaise with the LA when legal action is taken.

Parents must:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time (it is their legal duty).
- Notify the school without delay when their child is absent.
- Ensure the school has accurate home contact details which are promptly updated when changes occur, providing an additional emergency contact number of another trusted adult where possible and appropriate.
- Wherever possible, arrange medical and dental appointments out of school hours or during school holidays.
- Not take their child on holiday during term time.
- Effectively support the school when there are attendance or punctuality issues.

LA

The LA have legal powers to enforce school attendance which include:

Parenting Orders: Parents must attend formal tuition classes to improve their child's attendance.

Attendance Orders: Where parents formally agree to maintain the good attendance of their child.

Penalty Notices: Where unpaid these usually lead to prosecution.

Prosecution: Sanctions include fines, parenting orders, community orders, imprisonment.

Trustees

Review this policy annually and ensure all schools act in accordance with its' provisions. They also scrutinise attendance data, which is a standing item at all Standards Committee meetings.

Specific Circumstances

Education Off-Site

Students may attend provision other than at the school at which they are on roll. Provision includes attendance at:

- AEP's
- PRU's
- Another school for a MM or behaviour placement.
- Educational visit.

Appropriate safeguarding and risk assessments must be made whenever a student undertakes off-site education, with parents providing consent. Schools must also make daily attendance checks with the host organisation, which are recorded on school MIS.

Reduced Timetables

Reduced timetables are allowed to:

- To support re-integration into school after a prolonged absence or exclusion.
- Support a specific need such as medical or mental health.

Where agreed with parents (and social workers where relevant), they must be risk assessed by the school and parents must agree to undertake safeguarding responsibilities whenever their child is not attending school during school hours.

Arrangements are time-limited and should last for no more than a half term in total, after which the student must either return to full-time education at the school or attend AEP.

Absence will be classed as 'Authorised' in these circumstances and will be coded appropriately.

CME

Students become CME when they have ten consecutive days of unauthorised absence with no contact or failed to return from an authorised leave of absence, and no contact has been made with parents to establish their whereabouts. When a period of unauthorised absence reaches 20 consecutive days, they may be removed from the school roll.

Elective Home Education - EHE

When parents make a formal request to home-educate their child, the school must inform the LA who will want to be satisfied that they will be receiving an adequate standard of education. Once approved by the LA, the child can be removed from the school roll.

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the HOS in exceptional circumstances. Requests must be made in advance in writing from parents, with the HOS delegated authority to set the terms of any agreement. Students taking extended unauthorised leave of absence of 20 or more consecutive days may be removed from the school roll.

Religious Observance

For absence to be classed as Religious Observance, the day/s must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the child belongs. Up to three days can be coded as R in any year.



Data Collection and Analysis

Attendance and punctuality data is collected, analysed, and monitored daily by all schools.

Attendance Officers/staff have overall responsibility for ensuring that registers are correctly coded and accurate. They are reconciled at the end of each day to ensure that there are no missing marks, and correct codes have been entered.

Data is provided on a regular basis (daily; weekly; half termly; cumulative year; annual) to pastoral staff, the HOS and other senior leaders. This is a standing agenda item at school senior leadership and Trustee Standards Committee meetings.

Rewards and Sanctions

Good attendance should be encouraged and recognised by schools. Methods include:

- Praise.
- Achievement points.
- Letters, postcards, or phone calls home to parents.
- Attendance Certificates.
- Recognition in assemblies.
- Prizes.
- Trips.
- Treats.

Sanctions vary dependent on the age, individual circumstances, and developmental stage of the student. These can range from a student detention right up to criminal prosecution of parents.



Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Present Codes

B: Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity: When a student is taking part in supervised educational activity such as an educational visit, work experience or AEP.

The activity must be of an educational nature, approved by the school, and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the time/session for which the mark is recorded.

Note: Schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of students educated off-site. Therefore, by using the B code, schools are certifying that the education is supervised, and appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. Therefore, this code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a student is at home completing schoolwork.

Schools must also have measures in place ensuring the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absence.

D: Present at another Educational Establishment (Dual Registered).

The law allows for registration of students at more than one school, with the 'D' code used to indicate that they are attending another educational establishment such as a PRU, Hospital School, Special School, or MM. The setting should only record absence for the specified sessions, with effective arrangements in place to report absence back to the 'home' school.

J: Interview with Prospective Employers or Educational Establishment

Schools must ensure that the interview is for the stated purpose and the student attends as agreed.

P: Participation in an Approved/Supervised Sporting Activity

For sporting activities that have been approved by the school or supervised by someone authorised by the school.

V: Educational Visit

Attendance at an educational visit or residential organised by the school, or organisation approved by the school.

W: Work Experience

Work experience is for students in Years 10 and 11. Schools should ensure that employers immediately them of any absence.

Q: Behaviour Intervention in School

Present in school but removed from a timetabled class such as for internal suspension or in-school alternative learning activity.

Absence Codes

Authorised Absence: Is where an 'acceptable' reason for absence has been established. These include:

C: Absence Authorised by the School

This code is rarely used and should only be used in exceptional circumstances after careful consideration.

E: Excluded but no Alternative Provision Made: Used when a student is suspended and before 'sixth day provision' is made, or when a student has been permanently excluded up until the date of the PDC (refer to the Suspension and Exclusion Policy)

H: Leave of Absence Authorised by the School

I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

M: Medical or dental appointment

R: Religious observance

S: Study Leave

T: Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence

Definition comprises Roma, English, and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

Unauthorised Absence Codes

O: Student is absent from a session without a reason to authorise.

G: Holiday/Leave of Absence not unauthorised by the school or for more than the period authorised by HOS.

N: Reason for absence not yet provided. Schools should follow up all unexplained absence without delay, amending the register when a reason has been established. This must not be a permanent code, and where no reason is established after a reasonable amount of time should be replaced with 'O'.

O: Absent from school without authorisation.

U: Arrived in school after registration closed.

Other Absence Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

X: Not required to be in School

Used to record sessions that compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Y: unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Used when a student is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to unforeseen reasons.
- The transport provided by the school/LA is not available and where the student's home is not within walking distance.
- An emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the student from attending school.
- The student is in custody or has been detained for a period of less than four months. Where the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities, the attendance register can be coded as 'B' for these sessions.

Z: Pupil not on Admission Register

This code is used in advance of a student joining the school.

#: Planned Whole or Partial School Closure

This code is used for planned whole or partial school closures such as holidays/bank holidays; weekends (where required by MIS); staff training days; use of the school as a polling station; where schools have different term dates for different year groups; staggered starts; induction days.

Appendix 2: School Intervention Thresholds (Secondary)

PREVENTION → EARLY INTEVENTION → TARGETED SUPPORT

Concern Level	Percentage Attendance	Monitoring	Intervention/Support
Excellent	99-100%	Form Tutors (secondary), Pastoral and Attendance Staff, Senior Leaders (Pastoral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise from HOY/Form Tutor (secondary) Rewards 100% weekly / half term attendance/assemblies Follow up all unauthorised and amend SIMs Update parents regularly
Good	96-98%		
Emerging Cause for concern	93-95%	Attendance Staff, HOY and Form Tutor (secondary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) Praise for improved attendance reset every half term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 1 letter issued
Becoming a significant concern	90-92%	HOY (secondary) Attendance Staff ESW (“watch list”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 2 concerns letter to parents Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY)
Unacceptable	89 & below % 50 and below%	HOY (secondary) Attendance Staff Safeguarding Team ESW (monitoring list) DSL (particularly students below 50%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 3 concerns letter to parents Parent meeting to generate PIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY) ESW 6-week monitoring Fixed Penalty Notices of 2 monitoring periods failed ESW Stage 4 letter absences in monitoring period ESW Further monitoring failed, ESW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 5 letter court proceedings



Appendix 3: School Intervention Thresholds (Primary)

Concern Level	Percentage Attendance	Monitoring	Intervention/Support
Excellent	99-100%	Pastoral/Attendance Staff, Senior Leaders (Pastoral)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise • Rewards 100% weekly / half term attendance/assemblies • Follow up all unauthorised and amend SIMs • Update parents regularly
Good	96-98%		
Emerging Cause for concern	93-95%	Attendance/Pastoral Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance reset every half term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 letter issued
Becoming a significant concern	90-92%	Attendance/Pastoral Staff ESW (“watch list”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 concerns letter to parents • Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY)
Unacceptable	89 & below % 50 and below%	Attendance Team Safeguarding Team ESW (monitoring list) DSL (particularly students below 50%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 3 concerns letter to parents • Parent meeting to generate PIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY) • ESW 6-week monitoring • Fixed Penalty Notices of 2 monitoring periods failed ESW • Stage 4 letter absences in monitoring period ESW • Further monitoring failed, ESW Stage 5 letter court proceedings



99-100%	96-98%	93-95%	90-92%	89 and below% 50% and below
Excellent	Good	Emerging Concern	Significant Concern	Unacceptable Serious safeguarding concern
Full access to learning	A few learning opportunities missed	Risk of underachievement	Severe risk of underachievement	Extreme risk of underachievement
2 days missed	7 days missed	15 school days / 3 weeks missed	19 school days /4 weeks missed	More than 20 school days / 5 weeks missed