CARLTON
ACADEMY TRUST

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Approved on behalf of Trustees:	**Gareth Logan**
Date:	**October 2025**
Next Review:	**July 2026**

Glossary of Terms

AEP:	Alternative Education Provider.
AO:	Attendance Officer.
CAMHS:	Child Adolescent Mental Health Services.
CME:	Children Missing from Education.
DEOS:	Direction to Education Off Site
DSL:	Designated Safeguarding Lead
ESW:	Education Social Worker
FPN:	Fixed Penalty Notice.
HOY:	Head of Year
HOS:	Head of School.
LA:	Local Authority.
LOA:	Leave of Absence
MIS:	Management Information Systems
MM:	Managed Move.
NEET:	Not in Education Employment or Training
PA:	Persistent Absence (Attendance below 90%)
Parents:	Umbrella term also including parents and legal guardians.
PDC:	Pupil Disciplinary Committee.
PRU:	Pupil Referral Unit.
SA:	Severe Absence (Attendance below 50%)
SEND:	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
SNT:	School Nursing Team.
SW:	Social Worker
VSH:	Virtual School Head
YOT:	Youth Offending Team

Section One: Expectations and Routines

Benefits of Regular Attendance

There is a strong correlation between attendance and educational outcomes, with low attending children more likely to be NEET or be drawn into criminal activity. Strong attendance is facilitated by effective working partnerships between schools and parents, with schools acting promptly and proactively to ensure attendance and punctuality do not become entrenched problems.

Expectations

Attendance

All students should aim for full attendance, with attendance below 95% considered a cause for concern with parents contacted to discuss expectations and support needs.

Attendance below 90% is classified as PA and a serious cause for concern. A formal support plan will be developed and discussed with parents.

Attendance below 50% is classified as SA and a safeguarding concern.

There are specific circumstances (normally health/mental health related) which prevent strong attendance. Where it occurs, schools will provide support and/or refer to other agencies, and where necessary make reasonable adjustments.

Punctuality

Students are expected to attend school and lessons on time, making timely and prompt movements to lessons. Sanctions will be applied to students who fail to meet these standards, parents notified, and support plan implemented (where appropriate).

Routines

Start of the Day

Students arriving after the official start time will be classed as late. Sanctions will be applied appropriate to age and level of development, which normally comprises 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 lesson.

Registers are taken for all lessons in secondary schools so that truancy (internal and external) can be effectively monitored.

AO's monitor registers throughout the day so that any missing marks are resolved to ensure registers remain accurate at all times.

There are only limited circumstances where schools can authorise absence, made at the discretion of the HOS as shown in Appendix 1.

Absence Notification

Parents must inform school (call; text; email) without undue delay when their child is absent. Full details must be provided, with overview explanations such as 'illness' not acceptable.

Accepted evidence for regular illness absence includes prescriptions, appointment cards or texts. Where there is insufficient evidence provided, absence must be recorded as 'unauthorised,' and parents accordingly informed.

Absence for the following reasons must always be recorded as 'unauthorised':

- Student or family member's birthday, wedding, other family celebration.
- Shopping for school uniform or equipment.
- Having a haircut.
- Closure of sibling's school.
- Looking after a family member.
- Attending appointments for other family members (interpreting, etc)
- '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, except where justified and evidenced.
- Unauthorised leave of absence or holidays.
- Adverse weather (except where the school is closed).
- Regular patterns of illness or extended illness absence with no supporting medical evidence.

Where no reasons for absence are 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. A home visit will be carried out where there are safeguarding concerns, and the social worker will be informed where appropriate.

A home visit will take place within three school days where there are no immediate safeguarding concerns.

Attendance Support

Schools will provide support for all students where attendance is a concern.

Parents will be notified when attendance falls below 95% and where deemed appropriate and necessary invited into school to discuss reasons and support requirements.

When attendance becomes PA (below 90% the LA will be informed, who will implement a formal support plan. Where there is no discernible improvement, the LA will issue an FPN.

Where attendance becomes SA, the school may additionally make a referral to outside agencies such as the SNT, or CAMHS. When there are safeguarding concerns, LA Children's Social Care must be notified.

Section Two: Responsibilities and Specific Circumstances

Schools Must:

- Promptly establish reasons for absence.
- Maintain accurate attendance registers in accordance with statutory requirements, proactively monitoring these to identify emerging trends, and make effective interventions based on these.
- Consistently communicate attendance expectations to staff.
- Provide appropriate support to all students (including SEND) where needed.
- Appoint a designated senior leader with responsibility for attendance.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance.
- Regularly communicate attendance data to students, setting targets for improvement, support, and intervention where necessary.
- Regularly communicate attendance data to parents, highlighting when there is cause for concern and proactively working with them to support or remove barriers.
- Notify the LA (and other relevant parties) of any students who have unauthorised absence or represent a safeguarding concern.
- Set formal improvement targets for PA students.
- Make appropriate referrals and signpost parents to support from external agencies.
- Effectively consult with and support the LA when legal action is required.

Parents must:

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

LA

Has legal powers to enforce attendance including:

Parenting Orders: Formal classes to help improve their child's attendance.

Parental Attendance Contracts: Parents formally agree to maintain the good attendance of their child.

Penalty Notices: Fines for poor attendance.

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

Trustees

Annually review the attendance policy, ensuring all schools act in accordance with its' provisions, and scrutinise attendance data in 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, PRU's, another school (DEOS), or educational visit.

Appropriate safeguarding risk assessments must be made whenever a student undertakes offsite education, including parental consent. Schools must make daily attendance checks with the host organisation, recorded on school MIS and retain overall safeguarding responsibility.

Reduced Timetables

Used in exceptional cases to support reintegration or meet specific needs (typically medical or mental health). They must be time-limited, risk-assessed, and agreed with parents and other agencies, where relevant. The LA must always be informed of these arrangements.

Parents must accept full safeguarding responsibilities during any period when the student is not attending school during school hours.

CME

A student may be considered at risk of becoming a Child Missing Education (CME) if they have ten consecutive days of unauthorised absence and the school has been unable to contact the family. In such cases, the school will refer the matter to the LA to begin joint enquiries.

If the absence continues for twenty consecutive days and the student's whereabouts remain unknown despite reasonable efforts by both the school and the LA, the student may be removed from the school roll in accordance with Regulation 8(1)(f)(iii) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Elective Home Education - EHE

The LA must be informed when parents make a formal request to home-educate their child, who will ensure that they receive an adequate standard of education. Once approved, the child can be removed from roll.

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence during term time is granted at the discretion of the HOS in exceptional circumstances. Requests must be made in writing and in advance of any absence, with the HOS granted delegated authority to dictate agreed terms. When students have taken extended unauthorised leave of absence beyond twenty or more consecutive days, and the school has made reasonable enquiries but cannot locate the student, they may be removed from roll in accordance with Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Religious Observance

Up to three days is allowed in an academic year.

Data Collection and Analysis

Attendance and punctuality data are collected and monitored daily by all schools.

AOs are responsible for ensuring that registers are accurate, being reconciled at the end of each day to ensure that there are no missing marks, and correct codes have been entered.

Data is then made available on a daily, weekly, half term, term, cumulative year, and annual basis for use by pastoral staff, HOS, and other senior leaders.

Attendance is a standing agenda item at Trust Standards Committee meetings.

School and pupil level data is shared with the LA and DfE in accordance with statutory requirements.

Rewards and Sanctions

Good attendance must be recognised and rewarded through**:**

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

Sanctions vary dependent on age, individual circumstances, and developmental stage, ranging from detentions to prosecutions.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Attendance Codes

Authorised Codes

/ \: Present (AM and PM)
B: Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)
C: LOA for other exceptional circumstances
C1: LOA for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking employment abroad)
C2: LOA for compulsory school age pupil subject to part-time timetable
D: Dual registration with another school (Direction off site/Managed Move)
E: Suspended or Permanently Excluded (no alternative provision made)
H: Leave of absence agreed in advance
I: Illness
J1: LOA for and Interview for employment or at another educational establishment
K: Educational Activity arranged by the LA
L: Late (before registers closed)
M: Medical/Dental appointments
P: Approved sporting activity
Q: Unable to attend the school due to lack of access arrangements
R: Religious observance (authorised absence for three occurrences otherwise unauthorised)
S: LOA for studying for a public examination
T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U: Pupil attended school before the end of the session but after the register had closed
V: Educational visit/trip
W: Work experience

Unauthorised Codes

G: Leave of Absence not agreed in advance or more than agreed leave of absence length.
N: No reason yet provided for absence (reconciled at the end of each day to an authorised or unauthorised code by the Attendance Officer).
O: Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description).

Administrative Codes:

X: Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to attend
Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel.
Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Y4: Unable to attend due to school closure.
Y5: Unable to attend as the pupil is in criminal justice detention.
Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law.
Y7: Unable to attend because of other unavoidable causes (schools must record the nature of this)
Z: Pupil not yet on roll.
#: Attendance not expected (e.g., school holiday date/staff training day/staggered start)

Appendix 2: Stage 1 School Intervention Thresholds (Secondary)

PREVENTION → EARLY INTEVENTION → TARGETED SUPPORT

Concern Level	Percentage Attendance	Monitoring	Intervention/Support
Excellent	98-100%	Form Tutors (secondary), Pastoral and Attendance Staff, Senior Leaders (Pastoral)	• Praise from HOY/Form Tutor (secondary) • Rewards 100% weekly / half term attendance/assemblies • Follow up all unauthorised and amend BROMCOM • Update parents regularly
Good	95-97.99%		
Emerging Cause for concern	93-94.99%	Attendance Staff, HOY, and Form Tutor (secondary)	• Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance reset every half term. • School Letter 1 issued
Becoming a significant concern	90-92.99%	HOY (secondary) Attendance Staff ESW ("watch list")	• Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term. • School Letter 2 concerns letter to parents • Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY)
Unacceptable	Below 90% Below 50%	HOY (secondary) Attendance Staff Safeguarding Team ESW (monitoring list) DSL (particularly students below 50%)	• Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term. • School Letter 3 concerns letter to parents • Parent meeting to generate PIP. • Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY) • ESW monitoring • LA Stage 2 Enforcement Processes: Fixed Penalty Notices of two monitoring periods failed ESW and possible court proceedings

Appendix 3: School Intervention Thresholds (Primary)

Concern Level	Percentage Attendance	Monitoring	Intervention/Support
Excellent	98-100%	Pastoral/Attendance Staff, Senior Leaders (Pastoral)	• Praise • Rewards 100% weekly / half term attendance/assemblies • Follow up all unauthorised and amend BROMCOM • Update parents regularly
Good	95-97.99%		
Emerging Cause for concern	93-94.99%	Attendance/Pastoral Staff	• Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance reset every half term. • School Letter 1 issued
Becoming a significant concern	90-92.99%	Attendance/Pastoral Staff ESW ("watch list")	• Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term. • School Letter 2 concerns letter to parents • Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY)
Unacceptable Serious safeguarding concern	Below 90% Below 50%	Attendance Team Safeguarding Team ESW (monitoring list) DSL (particularly students below 50%)	• Short term targets set (100% attendance week on week) • Praise for improved attendance, reset every half term. • School Letter 3 concerns letter to parents • Parent meeting to generate PIP. • Daily attendance report monitoring (HOY) • ESW Monitoring • LA Stage 2 Enforcement Processes: Fixed Penalty Notices of two monitoring periods failed ESW and possible court proceedings.

98-100%	**95-97.99%**	**93-94.99%**	**90-92.99%**	**Below 90 %** **Below 50%**
Excellent	**Good**	**Emerging Concern**	**Significant Concern**	**Unacceptable** **Serious safeguarding concern**
Full access to learning	**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**	**20 school days /4 weeks missed**	**More than 25 school days / 5 weeks missed**