ATTENDANCE POLICY

DATE ADOPTED: September 2026

SIGNED BY HEADTEACHER: Signed copy stored in school office.

SIGNED BY CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: Signed copy stored in school office.

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: September 2027

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Leader – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

Mrs Aggreh

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Mrs Hodge

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more individual support with barriers to attendance:

Mrs Hodge in the first instance, who will liaise with Mrs Waddington, Pastoral Lead, as necessary

Carlton Colville Primary School

Attendance Policy

Introduction and Background

Carlton Colville Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "Working together to improve school attendance" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school;
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. **It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is the Headteacher, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.**

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Carlton Colville Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Provide a safe and welcoming environment and an engaging curriculum to encourage attendance to enable children to 'Be the best they can be'.
- Ensure that attendance registers are kept accurately, using all necessary register codes.
- Differentiate appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence - a letter from a parent does not authorise an absence, only the school can decide if the reason justifies authorising the absence.
- Phone parents on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been received.
- Contact parents when there is concern about a child's absence either by phone or letter.
- Consult with the Education Welfare Service with concerns around pupil's attendance or possible CME protocol.
- Make a referral to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) service where necessary which may lead to an attendance meeting between parents, EWO and school.
- Celebrate good attendance of pupils and classes (e.g. central displays/assemblies/certificates).
- Give pupil attendance updates at parent interviews, included with annual reports and through the school newsletters.
- Continue to undertake weekly attendance audits in school and termly attendance consultations with the EWO.

- Follow safeguarding procedures if attendance concerns persist.

Following CME and Safeguarding protocol if a reason for absence is not received and the school are unable to make contact with parents, this may result in a house visit, EWO referral or a Police referral

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the Headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends;
- day trips;
- Visiting relatives
- Over-sleeping and not attending for the rest of the day
- Where no explanation is given

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a **'persistent absentee'** when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent'**. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

Absence Procedures

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis is:

Mrs Hodge

office@carltoncolvilleprimary.co.uk

01502 572682

We monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school, the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence **before 8:55 am,** when our register closes

- The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into school personally and speak to the office staff. Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before making a decision as to whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised;

- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again **before 8:55 am.**

- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us.
- If we are unable to make contact with parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding.

If absence continues we will:

- Contact you either by phone or letter if your child's attendance is below 95% and/or where punctuality is a concern;
- Consider arranging a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Senior Attendance Leader.
- Create a personalised action/support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child;
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate;
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils are:

Registration starts: 8.40 am
Registration closes: 8.55 am
End of the school day: 3.10 pm

How we manage lateness:

If your child arrives after 8.55 am they must enter school through the main school office entrance as the children's doors will be closed. All children who arrive after this time need to sign in the Late Register and will also be recorded as 'L' - 'Authorised Late' in the class register. The registers are closed 15 minutes after the start of morning school. All arrivals after the registers close are marked as 'U' - 'Unauthorised Late' in the class register, which is an unauthorised absence.

Afternoon school starts at

Reception – 12.40 pm

Year 1- 12.40 pm	Year 4 – 1.00 pm
Year 2 – 12.40 pm	Year 5 – 1.00 pm
Year 3 – 12.40 pm	Year 6 – 1.00 pm

Afternoon registers close 15 minutes after the start of the afternoon session.

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with Mrs Aggreh, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

If a child/children are not collected on time at the end of the day, they will wait at the school office for collection.

Please ensure your child is collected promptly as this also can cause distress.

PLEASE HELP US TO MAKE THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE SCHOOL DAY A STRESS-FREE AND SMOOTH EXPERIENCE FOR ALL CHILDREN.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health Support Team, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who live with long-term medical conditions, who have special educational needs and disabilities, or have other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils, however we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We will discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support advice from external partners, where appropriate.

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more detailed support on attendance:

Mrs Hodge in the first instance, who will liaise with Miss Waddington, Pastoral Lead, as necessary

Local Authority attendance support services

The Local Authority Attendance Team work strategically by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absences and improve overall attendance.

Parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken.

School Attendance and the Law

In accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a ‘parent’, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred ‘biological parent’) but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England: 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school-week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school-week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Where the threshold is met, the school will consider the individual circumstances and whether a penalty notice should be requested from the Local Authority, in line with the National Framework and Suffolk's Code of Conduct. Where appropriate, a Notice to Improve may be used to give parents an opportunity to engage with support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. This will not be appropriate in every case.

The penalty for a first penalty notice is £160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year period will be £160, payable within 28 days. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within that three-year period. Where the threshold is met for a third or subsequent time, the Local Authority will consider alternative action, which may include prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.

Prosecution for irregular school attendance may result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or imprisonment for up to three months. A parent convicted of an offence may receive a criminal conviction.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during term time to go on holiday or for other purposes of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity during school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that regular school attendance is defined as attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It is a rule of this school that leave of absence will not be granted during term time unless the Headteacher considers there to be exceptional circumstances, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Each request will be considered individually. The decision to grant leave rests with the Headteacher or an authorised person.

If you need to request term-time absence, you will need to complete a 'Leave of Absence Request' form, available from the school office or via the school website. The form should be completed and returned to school at least 4 weeks before the proposed absence. Parents/carers will be notified of the outcome. You may be asked to provide supporting information, such as booking details confirming the dates of the proposed absence.

The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents accompanying the child on the holiday are also allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after an application for leave has been refused, or where no application has been made, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The school may request a penalty notice in line with the National Framework and Suffolk's Code of Conduct in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence. The Local Authority will decide whether to issue a penalty notice.

At Carlton Colville Primary School, ‘exceptional circumstances’ will be considered on an individual basis. The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional’ are that events are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By ‘unavoidable’, we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time. These principles will guide our decisions but will not be treated as an exhaustive definition.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance (Working together to improve school attendance).

The Headteacher/school may discuss a leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to help determine whether exceptional circumstances apply.

If leave of absence is unauthorised, the school will not provide work for children to complete during their absence.

The Local Authority may also consider issuing a penalty notice before the national threshold is met where this is appropriate under the National Framework and Suffolk’s Code of Conduct. Examples may include parents deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term-time holidays below the threshold, or repeated absences for birthdays or other family events.National Framework for Penalty Notices

Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving Carlton Colville Primary School, other than at the end of year 6, parents/carers are required to inform us in writing. This provides school with the following information: Child’s name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and may appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for the pupil and key family members, in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations, all schools are **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil’s name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil’s name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Absence data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.
We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

School's Governing Body Responsibilities

Governors recognise the importance of attendance in learning, attainment and raising aspirations. The Governing Body will appoint one of their members to be the Attendance Link Governor. This is currently Mrs S Way.

The Attendance Link Governor is responsible for:

- Ensuring the school is regularly monitoring attendance;
- Meeting with the Senior Attendance Leader to review attendance data and plans for improving attendance e.g. rewards for good attendance;
- Reviewing the level of persistent absenteeism and the actions being taken to address it;
- Reporting to the Governing Body termly on attendance matters.

Further information

Working together to improve school attendance

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance__applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (legislation.gov.uk)

https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/anti-social-behaviour-act-2003-penalty-notice-code-of-conduct.pdf

DfE external document template (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

School Penalty Notice for School Attendance are changing from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Please note: The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Per Parent*, Per Child

A School Penalty Notice is issued to each parent*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate penalty notices.

*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences

(within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500
Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

APPENDIX A

CARLTON COLVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL
APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL

- In-line with legislation schools are unable to authorise any absence requests for term-time holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please note you may be asked to provide booking details to confirm dates
- The school would not support any leave of absence which coincided with assessments/tests.
- All requests for absences should be submitted to the school no less than **4 weeks prior** to the start of the absence. Each application will be considered individually.

I wish to apply for leave of absence to be granted for:

Name of child _____ Class _____

Date of proposed absence:

First Day of absence _____ Last day of absence _____

Total number of school days ☐

Reason for absence request:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name/s of any other siblings:

Name of child: _____ Class _____

Name of child: _____ Class _____

Name of parent/carer: _____

Signature of parent/ carer: _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE:

This absence has been UNAUTHORISED / AUTHORISED
Date ping sent:
Entered in Register/Arbor:
Absence overview date:
F/up date:
Total no. of days' absence:
Penalty Notice Referral / Attendance Meeting:

CARLTON COLVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

As you will be aware there is an increased focus on attendance in schools. There are two main reasons for this, the first being the safety of young people, the second the link between attendance and attainment.

As a result, Suffolk County Council has sent guidance to schools with particular reference to family holidays/absences during term-time. This is summarised below:

- Research has demonstrated a high correlation between attendance and attainment.
- Suffolk County Council does not support holidays/absences during term time other than in **most exceptional circumstances.**
- Please note you may be asked to provide booking details to confirm dates
- Parents do not have the right to take their children out of school for a family holiday.
- Any request to the school for a term time absence will be considered on its merits but the **general policy is not to authorise leave of absence for such family holidays.**
- Request for leave should be submitted to the school no less than 4 weeks prior to the start of the absence.
- Any absence taken without the permission of the school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Children Missing in Education- Schools' Responsibilities

> 'Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.'

Finally, we hope that all parents whose children attend School will be mindful of their child's right to full-time education and will support our school in working towards excellent attendance.

Leave of Absence (Term time holidays)

Parents/carers are expected to take their child(ren) on holiday during the 14 weeks school holidays to minimise the impact of their child(ren) missing their education. Leave of absence taken during term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised absences will be recorded on your child's attendance record.

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.