



**Calday Grange**  
Grammar School

# **ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY & ABSENCE POLICY**

**Approved by Full Governing Body: 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019**  
**Date of next review: November 2021**

## **Aim**

To raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in school life.

## **Purpose of this policy**

- To secure attendance at school unless absence is authorised
- To identify problem area(s) that would explain non-attendance
- To work together with parents, school staff, and the Educational Social Worker to maintain good attendance, securing help for students with problems.

## **Strategy**

In order to deal with attendance problems effectively and efficiently, the following strategy will be followed by the school:

1. Registers need to be marked accurately according to guidance issued.
2. Attendance records kept for every class from year 7 to 13 and all non-attendance checked against the daily register that will be taken at am registration (8.40 am). P.M. registration will be taken from the lesson registration for P5. Attendance will be monitored during each lesson using the SIMS system.
3. Parents are required to inform the school of the absence of a student on the first day of absence, if this is not done, parents will be contacted to confirm the absence.
4. If an absence is known in advance parents are expected to inform the Administration Office in writing.
5. If a student is taken ill or, for any other reason, has to go home, contact with a responsible adult will be made by the Administration Office prior to the student leaving the premises.
6. Students remaining after school, but not with a member of staff, must register name, form and location with the Administration Office. No unsupervised child is to remain on site after 17.00.
7. All late arrivals must sign in at Reception.

## **Attendance Data**

Student attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student's attendance is a cause for concern.

If attendance falls below 96% without the school being aware of the reason, contact is made with home outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support. If attendance does not improve, the thresholds and actions outlined below are followed:

96%

- Form tutor will meet with the student
- Form tutor will continue to monitor attendance

94%

- House Pastoral Leader or their Deputy will contact parent/carers to offer support
- House Pastoral Leader or their Deputy will speak to student to offer support
- Students may be referred to Learning Mentor to help monitor and improve attendance & punctuality

Below 90%

- Director of Student Services will contact parents/carers if appropriate and invite them into school to conduct an attendance meeting and set targets as necessary.
- Absences will be analysed and referred through to Wirral Attendance Service where appropriate.
- If attendance does not improve, legal action may follow.

A student will be considered to be persistently absent if he/she is away 10% of school sessions in an academic year i.e. 90% and below attendance.

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Calday Grange Grammar School will share attendance data with the Department for Education, and the local authority as required. All information shared will be done so in accordance with GDPR Guidelines and the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Parental Responsibilities and Legislation**

Calday Grange Grammar School operates a graduated response to non-attendance to try to prevent the eventuality of Education Penalty Notices being issued. As indicated above, parents/carers may receive a variety of letters warning of their child's poor attendance. In some circumstances, an Attendance Panel may be necessary to implement measures to improve a student's attendance.

Local Authorities have the power to prosecute parents/carers who fail to comply with a school attendance order (section 443 of the Education Act 1996) or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school (section 444 of the Education Act 1996). Parents who fail in this duty may be prosecuted via the courts and fined up to £2,500 or, in some cases, imprisoned. Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 states that, as an alternative to prosecution, parents may be issued with an Educational Penalty Notice if their child's absence from school is unauthorised. These may be issued if a student has 10 sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence in any one term. Fixed Educational Notices are £60 per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent if paid within 28 days.

Education Penalty Notices can be served for punctuality if the student attends after 9.30 am and receives a U in the register (after registers have closed). 10 U's in an academic term result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

### **Request for Absence**

The granting of leave rests with the Director of Student Services. Family holidays will not be authorised unless there is evidence that students are unable to go on holiday at any other time due to restrictions placed upon parental leave. Evidence will be requested. Permission for taking a student out of school can only be given by the Director of Student Services. Parents must complete a leave of absence form, available on line, and return it to the Administrator to Student Services, Mrs Susan Humphreys. Leave of absence will only be given subject the circumstances of the request.

Requests for absence must be submitted on the appropriate form available on the school website and completed at least two weeks in advance of the leave when possible. The "Request for Absence" form outlines the decision making process applied to leave requests.

Students needing to leave the site during the day for medical and other appointments should present the request to the Administration Office who will issue a slip to be presented at reception on leaving the site and carried to the appointment.

## **Punctuality**

### **Lates Procedure**

- A member of the pastoral team is on the school gate each morning until 8.45 am to monitor punctuality.
- Students who are late without good reason will be issued with a lunchtime detention the following day.
- Parents/carers of students who fail to attend on a subsequent occasions will be contacted by a member of the SLT and the detention will be rearranged.
- Continued lateness and failure to attend detentions will result in a meeting with a member of SLT.
- Persistent lateness will result in an Educational Penalty Notice.

### **Authorised/Unauthorised absence**

Under Section 7 of the Education Act of 1996 parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a full time education. It is a further offence for a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly, fails without reasonable justification to cause him or her to attend.

The law requires all schools to indicate in their attendance register whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence means that the school has given approval in advance or the explanation has been accepted as satisfactory (Education Regulations 1995).

### **Only the school can approve absence**

#### **Authorised absence**

- a) Absence is authorised by LAW if:
- i) Attendance is prevented due to sickness or any other unavoidable cause.
  - ii) Religious observance.
  - iii) Lack of suitable transport and the school is not within walking distance.
  - iv) Performance licenses by the LEA.
- b) Situation where authorisation might reasonably be given:
- i) Domestic circumstances such as bereavement. These would usually be deemed exceptional circumstances.
  - ii) Exclusion for a fixed period.
  - iii) Attending interviews, e.g. another educational establishment.
  - iv) Medical appointments.
  - v) Approved sporting activity.
  - vi) Study leave.
  - vii) Educational visits.
  - viii) Work experience.
  - ix) Holidays when parents are unable to take leave due to restriction placed upon them by their employer- evidence will be required.

## **Unauthorised absence**

- a) Truancy – absence without parents’ knowledge and approval. This includes those who leave the site after being registered.
- b) Condoned absence – students who are kept home for shopping, baby-sitting etc. – regardless of an explanation being given by a parent. A note/email giving explanations for absence does not authorise the absence. The responsibility to authorise lies with the school)
- c) Lateness –if a pupil arrives after this time he/ she would be marked as an unauthorised absence if the reason were not accepted.

All absences must be supported by a written note or email from a parent, carer or guardian. Any failure to present such communication will be followed up by the Director of Student Service’s Office. All such notes need to be retained by the Pastoral Office in pupil files.

## **Procedures**

### **Form tutor/school action on attendance**

The role of the form tutor is crucial in recording the absences and their significance. They are the first stage in the recognition and recording of concern. Parents need to be encouraged to make contact as soon as possible, not only as to absences but also with regard to other possible causes for concern. Students need to have good attendance reinforced with positive messages. Procedures should be made clear to them.

- Subject tutors should also be vigilant as to absences from their lessons.
- Concerns as to absence need to be communicated to the House Pastoral Leader.
- Learning Mentor support is available for students who are failing to maintain above 90% attendance
- If the efforts of the school are not effective and regular attendance is not achieved, formal referral must be made to the Wirral Attendance Service.

### **Interpretation of Data**

Form tutors should look for unexplained absences and patterns of absence, e.g.

- Regular absences on the same day
- Frequent absences for short periods
- Pupils absent for more than 3 days in any 4 weeks
- Any group absences
- Frequent lateness
- Regular lateness
- Regular absence from morning/afternoon sessions
- Sudden onset of absences
- Frequent illness
- Frequent absence with permission

### **Review**

The Senior Leadership Team will keep attendance regularly under review and report to the Governors’ Curriculum Committee once a term on the attendance figures and any particular problems.

## **SIXTH FORM ATTENDANCE**

Follows the same procedure as students in Years 7 – 11. Sixth Form students have the opportunity to complete authorised enrichment one morning or afternoon per week and must apply to the Head of Year e.g. driving lessons.

### **University Open Days**

A maximum of two days will be allowed for University Open Day visits. Students are expected to attend at weekends and, if possible, should not request any leave of absence.

### **Work Experience**

Will be granted on an ad hoc basis after the Year 12 examinations.

### **Non-attendance and punctuality**

Poor punctuality and persistent absence will result in an attendance contract and ultimately, students with a poor attendance record may be asked to leave if they do not respond to supportive measures to improve their attendance. Punctuality and attendance data is often requested by future employers.