



Attendance Policy

Calcot Infants and Junior Schools

1. Document Control

Adopted / Adopted and Adapted / Schools own: **School's own**

Review Period: **2 years**

Responsible Committee: **Curriculum**

Statutory: **No**

Required on website: **Yes**

Ratified by Full Governors: **June 2021 (Working Party)**

Review Due: **June 2023**

Chair of Governors Signature: **Mr Mark Hazelton**

2. Change History

Version	Date	Amendment or No Change
1	May 2014	No changes
2	November 2017	Amended
2	October 2018	No changes
3	June 2021	Amended

3. Website History

Version	Date on website
3	June 2021

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

The Calcot Schools are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognise this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

The policy has been drawn up based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE) The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

School's roles and responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at the Calcot Schools have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Role of Headteacher

The Headteacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The Headteacher will ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to all staff, pupils and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and the Governing Body. The Headteacher will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers on SIMs. The admin staff complete the registers using the prescribed codes (shown overleaf).

REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual Registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (ie pupil attending another establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in access of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence Covid related absences e.g. isolation	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Morning registration will take place at the start of school (15 minutes after the doors open). The registers will remain 'open' for 15 minutes. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as 'present' or 'in attendance'. Following this, any pupil arriving after this time but before half an hour has passed (from the time the door was opened) will be marked as Late. If a pupil arrives over half an hour late from the time the door opened they will be marked as a U=Late after registers closed unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration for FS will be at 12:45pm, KS1 and KS2 at 1.05pm. The registers will close immediately as pupils remain onsite during lunchbreak and therefore no 'lates' are recorded for afternoon sessions.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office. **It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.**

For the same reason, it is important that parents of pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day inform the school office. The school office will record that the child has left the school site and will mark them back in when they return.

Both schools celebrate good attendance with certificates, weekly cup and yearly badges

Categorising absence

- i) A mark will be made in respect of each child following the close of the registers. Any child who is not present will be marked unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.
- ii) The Calcot Schools recognise the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be **as damaging to a child's education** as unauthorised absence, as it will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Calcot Schools will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised.
- iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 2 weeks**, the absence will remain unauthorised;
- iv) Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:
 - (a) where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example –
 - a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
 - a pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered,
 - in **exceptional** circumstances, permission has been granted for a family holiday for which the parents have sought permission in advance – see advice from West Berks for appropriate circumstances
 - (b) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

- (c) where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand;
 - (d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions;
 - (e) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's / student's parents belong;
 - (f) the pupil lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;
 - (g) in other **exceptional circumstances** (eg a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.
- v) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:
- if a child's attendance is below 95%, for the twelve weeks, prior to the request.
 - no explanation has been given by the parent;
 - the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
 - the pupil or parents are staying at home to mind the house;
 - the pupil or parents are shopping during school hours;
 - the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, eg a birthday;
 - the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;

Frequent Absence

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will seek advice from the schools' EWO.

Attendance registers will be examined by the school, at least once per half term (i.e. 6x a year) and the school will identify any children of concern.

Each term the Attendance Lead will meet with the EWO to review attendance and see if any child needs to be added to/removed from the concern list.

If a child's attendance is below 90% and there are concerns the school will follow a clear procedure. Parents or carers may also be telephoned if this is felt more appropriate.

Procedure:

A letter from the Headteacher to highlight concerns.

Families are offered support with attendance through our School Family Support Workers.

If absence does not improve the school concerns are referred to the EWO.

A letter from the EWO highlighting concerns and offering advice.

A letter from the EWO setting attendance targets and will reach out to families to support them in a variety of ways.

If the targets set by the EWO are not met a meeting with the child's family, school and EWO will be held.

A letter from the EWO inviting the family to an Attendance Panel. (This is a formal meeting to discuss absence, the implications of absence both in terms of education and parental responsibility and to identify and agree a way forward to improve attendance).

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will seek advice from the schools' EWO. In exceptional circumstances, the LA may decide to move forward with a prosecution.

Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Absences after close of class registers

Any sudden absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the classteacher and reported to the school office. The school office will advise the Headteacher.

Staff Training

The School Attendance Leader will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

Collection and analysis of data

The Headteacher will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported.

Attendance is monitored by year group and by reasons for absence Letters are sent on a termly basis as well as at any point during the term when attendance patterns are poor or change suddenly

The schools will look at data with the EWO on a termly basis

Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE (via the Local Authority and SIMS) within the stipulated time frame.

Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Calcot Schools. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

The Calcot Schools have procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week. The school office will contact the families for an explanation of absence and refer to the Headteacher.

First-day calling

The Calcot Schools have in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day if a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. If the school are not able to make contact (via telephone) with the parent, they will send them a text message using parent mail. Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence, the school will send message to them via parent mail.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences

Referral to the Education Welfare Officer

If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. Details about this are above under 'Frequent Absence'.

Term-time Holidays

Term-time holidays are intended for children whose parents are unable to take holiday at any other time.

Calcot Schools will consider every application individually; its policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays **is not a right**. The following are always considered.

- An application must be made in writing using the appropriate form for service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- parents who are subject to a strict and un-negotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

The Calcot Schools will respond to all requests for a leave of absence using the appropriate form (see appendix) giving the reasons for the decision.

The Calcot Schools will NOT authorise a holiday during periods of national tests, ie SATS

Extended leave of absence

In considering absence for extended trips overseas The Calcot Schools will take account of the following:

- a visit to family overseas has a very different significance from a normal 'holiday';
- such visits may be important in terms of children identify and self-esteem as they grow up;
- parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child's uninterrupted attendance at school (although parents could be encouraged to use the school holiday periods for at least part of their trip);
- the reasons for wishing to make a visit is more difficult, particularly for minority ethnic families, where huge distances and high costs are involved;
- where extended leave of absence is granted there will be an expectation that the pupil undertakes some school-set work during this period.

Parents' / carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by The Calcot Schools

The Calcot Schools expect parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

Parents will also be expected to:

- notify the school on the first day of absence (using the dedicated absence lines)
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- Keep the school informed if there are problems that could affect a child's attendance;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives

Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher.

Governors' responsibilities

The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Reviewing the policy

The school will review this policy every 2 years.