Callowell Primary School

Attendance Policy 2025-26

Owner:	Principal – J Roberts
Approved by:	School Development Board
Last review:	November 2025
Approved:	November 2025
Next review due:	November 2026

1. Aims

This policy sets out **Callowell Primary School's** commitment to promoting excellent attendance and punctuality. It reflects our duty to meet the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (effective from **19 August 2024**).

Through our whole-school culture and ethos, we aim to:

- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all pupils.

- Promote the value and benefits of regular attendance.

- Reduce all forms of absence, including persistent and severe absence.

- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.

- Act promptly to identify and address patterns of absence.

- Build strong, positive relationships with families to ensure pupils receive the support they need to attend school.

We also actively promote and support punctual attendance at all lessons.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (2024) and *School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures* guidance. It draws on the following legislation, which sets out the statutory duties governing school attendance:

- Part 6 of the **Education Act 1996**

- Part 3 of the **Education Act 2002**

- Part 7 of the **Education and Inspections Act 2006**

- The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**, and subsequent amendments (2010, 2011, 2013, 2016)

- The **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**

- The **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** and **2024 Amendment**

It also refers to:

- DfE **School Census Guidance**

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education**

- **Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools**

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Setting and maintaining high expectations for attendance across the school community.

- Ensuring school leaders meet statutory duties, including accurate record-keeping and required data sharing with the DfE and local authority.

- Ensuring the school works effectively with local partners to remove barriers to attendance.

- Embedding the importance of attendance across school policy and ethos.

- Monitoring and challenging attendance data to identify areas requiring improvement.

- Supporting leaders to allocate appropriate resources to pupils who need the most support.

- Ensuring all staff receive relevant and ongoing training in attendance procedures, legal duties, and data analysis.

- Sharing best practice on attendance improvement across schools within the Trust.

- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation and impact of this policy.

3.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy across the school.

- Monitoring attendance and absence data, and reporting trends to the Governing Board.

- Supporting staff in monitoring attendance of individual pupils.

- Evaluating the impact of attendance strategies.

- Issuing fixed penalty notices where necessary.

- Working with parents/carers of pupils with SEND to develop tailored attendance support.

- Liaising with the local authority when attendance barriers relate to pupils with EHC plans.

- Communicating high expectations for attendance and punctuality to pupils and families.

- Sharing attendance data with the local authority as required, including:

  o When a pupil is added to or removed from the school roll.

  o When a pupil has 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence.

  o When a pupil is expected to miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively due to illness.

3.3 Designated Senior Leader for Attendance

The designated senior leader (Attendance Champion) is responsible for:

- Leading and driving attendance improvement across the school.

- Establishing a clear vision and strategy for attendance.

- Maintaining a strong understanding of absence data and trends.

- Coordinating intervention and reintegration plans with pupils and families.

- Liaising effectively with external agencies where required.

- Providing regular progress reports to the Headteacher and Governors.

Designated Attendance Lead: *Mr J. Roberts*

📧 *jroberts@cps.cbat.academy* | ☎ *01453 762962*

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Accurately recording attendance for each session using the correct DfE codes (see Appendix 1).

- Submitting attendance data promptly to the school office.

3.5 Administrative Staff

Administrative staff will:

- Record absence notifications from parents/carers each day.

- Maintain attendance records and update registers as required.

3.6 Parents/Carers

For the purpose of this policy, "parent" includes:

- All natural parents, whether married or not.

- Those with parental responsibility.

- Those with day-to-day care of the child.

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day and on time.

- Notify the school of absences by 9:00am, explaining the reason and expected return date.

- Provide multiple emergency contact numbers.

- Arrange appointments outside the school day where possible.

- Adhere to attendance contracts agreed with the school or local authority.

- Seek early support from the school when attendance difficulties arise.

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school **every day**, arrive on time, and take responsibility for their punctuality.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

The school maintains an **electronic attendance register** for all pupils.
Registers are taken:

- At the **start of the first session** of each school day.

- At the **start of the afternoon session**.

Registers use national attendance and absence codes from the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024* to indicate whether each pupil is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendments to the register will include:

- The original entry

- The amended entry

- The reason for amendment

- The date the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made it

We will also record:

- Whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

- The nature of any approved educational activity.

- The reason for absence due to exceptional circumstances.

All register entries will be retained for **six years**.

The school day runs from **8:40am to 3:15pm**.

- Pupils must arrive by **8:40am** each day.

- The morning register is taken at **8:45am** and remains open until **9:30am**.

- The afternoon register is taken at **1:15pm**.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school of the reason for absence **by 9:00am** on the first day, or as soon as possible, by contacting the school office via:

📞 *01453 762962*   📧 *admin@cps.cbat.academy*

- Absences due to physical or mental illness will normally be marked as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

- If an absence extends beyond **five days**, or authenticity is in doubt, medical evidence may be requested (e.g. doctor's note, prescription, appointment card).

- The school will not request medical evidence unnecessarily.

- Where the evidence is unsatisfactory, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be informed in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

- Medical or dental appointments are authorised if the school is notified in advance. Parents should request such absences via the school office.

- Where possible, appointments should be made outside school hours.

- Pupils should only be absent for the minimum time necessary.

- Requests for other types of planned absence must be made **in advance**, in line with the procedures set out in Section 5.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils arriving after the start of the school day will be marked as follows:

- **Before the register closes:** marked as *Late* (using the correct code).

- **After the register closes:** marked as *Unauthorised Absence* (using the appropriate code).

4.5 Following Up Unexplained Absence

Where a pupil fails to attend without explanation, the school will:

1. **Contact parents/carers** on the first morning of absence to establish the reason.

   o If no contact can be made, the school may conduct a **home visit** or contact the **police** to ensure the child's safety.

2. Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.

3. Record the correct attendance code within **five working days** of the absence.

4. Continue to call parents daily until an explanation is received.

5. Escalate concerns to the **Education Welfare Officer** if absences persist.

6. Notify relevant agencies, such as the youth offending team, where appropriate.

7. Offer support or intervention to families to improve attendance.

8. Where support is refused or unsuccessful, issue a **Notice to Improve**, **Penalty Notice**, or pursue other legal measures (see Section 5.2).

4.6 Reporting to Parents

Parents will be **regularly informed** about their child's attendance and punctuality, through written reports and meetings as required.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The Headteacher may authorise certain absences for educational or exceptional reasons, in accordance with the **2024 Attendance Regulations**.

Permissible reasons include:

- Taking part in a **regulated performance** or **employment abroad**.

- Attending an **interview**.

- **Study leave** for public examinations.

- A **temporary, part-time timetable** agreed for educational or medical reasons.

Exceptional Circumstances

- Leave of absence will only be granted at the Headteacher's discretion and for exceptional reasons.

- Holidays during term time will **not be authorised**.

- Requests must be made **at least five days in advance**, using the school's absence request form.

- Evidence may be requested to support the application.

Other authorised absences may include:

- Illness (physical or mental health).

- Religious observance days.

- Traveller families' occupational commitments.

- Suspension/exclusion where no alternative provision exists.

- Off-site educational visits or activities.

- Dual registration or local authority provision.

- Other unavoidable causes (e.g. travel disruption or emergency closures).

5.2 Sanctions

The school will use a **graduated approach** to improving attendance, including support and, where necessary, sanctions.

Penalty Notices

- Issued by the Headteacher, local authority, or police when a pupil has **10 or more unauthorised absences in 10 school weeks**.

- Each liable parent may receive a penalty notice:

  o £80 if paid within 21 days; £160 if paid from 22- 28 days.

- A third notice cannot be issued for the same child within three years — legal action will instead be pursued.

- Notices may also be issued when parents allow a child to be in a public place during the first five days of suspension or exclusion without reasonable cause.

Notices to Improve

If a pupil's attendance meets the national threshold but parents fail to engage with support, a formal **Notice to Improve** may be issued.
This notice will include:

- The pupil's attendance record and offences.

- Details of support offered so far.

- The benefits of regular attendance.

- A clear improvement timeframe (3–6 weeks).

- A warning that a penalty notice may follow if attendance does not improve.

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6. Strategies to Support Good Attendance

Early intervention is essential to prevent persistent absence. The school will review attendance **every half-term** and contact families promptly where concerns arise.

Early intervention measures include:

- First-day contact for all unexplained absences.

- Analysis of attendance data to identify patterns of concern.

- Investigation and resolution of unexplained absences within one week.

Formal Attendance Process:

- **Step 1:** Initial concern letter to parents.

- **Step 2:** Follow-up letter outlining next steps and legal responsibilities.

- **Step 3:** Invitation to an **Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM)** to discuss barriers and support strategies (reviewed after 6 weeks).

- **Step 4:** Final notification letter explaining the legal process for continued poor attendance.

The school's approach will always be **supportive**, working with families to identify barriers and develop sustainable solutions.

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8. Attendance Monitoring and Data Use

8.1 Monitoring Attendance

Attendance and punctuality data will be monitored:

- **Weekly, half-termly, termly, and annually**

- At whole-school, cohort, and individual levels

Data will be shared with the **DfE** and **local authority** as required and benchmarked against local, regional, and national statistics.

8.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Regularly analyse attendance patterns to identify pupils or groups requiring support.

- Conduct detailed half-termly, termly, and annual reviews to identify trends.

- Identify persistent or severe absence and implement early intervention plans.

8.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The school will:

- Develop **targeted action plans** to address attendance concerns.

- Provide **attendance reports** to teachers, governors, and relevant school leaders.

- Evaluate the impact of all interventions and adjust strategies accordingly.

- Collaborate with **local partners** and **other schools** to share effective practice.

8.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

- **Persistent absence:** Missing 10% or more of sessions.

- **Severe absence:** Missing 50% or more of sessions.

To address these:

- Analyse data to identify patterns and potential safeguarding concerns.

- Hold regular meetings with parents/carers to review attendance plans.

- Provide access to wider support services to address barriers.

- Apply sanctions only where support is unsuccessful.

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9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **every two years**, or sooner if national or local guidance changes.
The **Governing Board** will review and approve the policy at each cycle.

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10. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

- **Behaviour Policy**