Castleford Trust

Attendance Policy

Version No:	Date Ratified:	Review Date:
2.0	27/08/2025	27/08/2026

Contents

1. Key Information

Academy starts at	*See academy specific policy for details.*
Academy ends at	*See academy specific policy for details.*
AM Register – time close *The AM register closes 30 minutes after the school start time. Arrivals after this will be marked as unauthorised, unless a satisfactory, evidenced reason is provided.*	*See academy specific policy for details.*
PM Register- time close	*See academy specific policy for details.*
Senior Leadership Member responsible for Attendance (Attendance Champion)	*See academy specific policy for details.*
Academy telephone number to report an absence.	*See academy specific policy for details.*

2. Introduction

Castleford Academy Trust is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent academy attendance. Regular and punctual attendance enables pupils to access the full curriculum, benefit from high-quality teaching, and develop positive relationships within the school community. Good attendance builds a sense of belonging and plays a significant role in securing strong academic outcomes.

Attendance is a shared responsibility. Pupils, parents and carers, academy staff, governors, and external partners all contribute to creating a culture in which excellent attendance is the norm. The Trust recognises that barriers to attendance may be complex and individual, and that a supportive and considered approach is essential. Attendance is everyone's business, and a collective effort is required to ensure all pupils are supported to attend regularly and achieve their full potential.

All academies within the Trust aim for 100% attendance for all pupils. The attendance target for each individual pupil is 97%. A pupil achieving 97% attendance across a full academic year will have missed fewer than six days of school.

Each academy will work in partnership with families, the local authority, and external agencies to support pupils in maintaining high levels of attendance. A support-first approach underpins all intervention, ensuring that families are offered appropriate help and guidance before legal measures are considered.

Improving attendance is a shared responsibility, and can only be achieved through effective communication, collaboration, and a consistent commitment to supporting every pupil to succeed both academically and personally.

3. The Legal Framework

The policy is set out within the framework of the Education Act 1996, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, including amendments and other non-statutory guidance. Parents have a duty to ensure that their child attends the academy regularly and on time. Parents/carers are liable to a Penalty Notice Fine or prosecution under Section 444 (1(A)).

The law entitles every child of compulsory 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/carer to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at an academy or by education otherwise than at an academy.

Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at an academy, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that academy regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the academy 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 academy.

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including but not limited to:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (or most up to date version)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (or most up to date version)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulation 2006 (and subsequent amendments)
- Children Missing Education 2016

4. Academy's Roles and Responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent academy attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the academy community and look forward to coming to the academy every day. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the academy's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the academy. This person will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data is available and relevant issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties. Parents/carers will regularly be reminded about the legal requirement for, and the importance of, good academy attendance.

By law, each academy is required to take an attendance register twice a day; at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon. Any pupil who is not present at this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the academy in advance, or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the academy as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the academy at a later stage, the register will be amended. The decision about whether any absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the academy and not with parents/carers.

Castleford Academy Trust recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be damaging to a young person's education. Our secondary academy's use individual lesson registers, in addition to the statutory morning and afternoon registers to track pupils' whereabouts throughout the day, deal with any truancy that occurs after morning or afternoon registration and to ensure the safety of all pupils. The Attendance Senior 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 correctly. The academy will ensure the attendance register is marked accurately. Classroom teachers and tutors are responsible for completing the attendance registers, and the Attendance Improvement Officer/Attendance Administrator/Office staff (primary) will ensure the correct codes are in place.

5. Expectations of Trustees and Governors

All Castleford Academy Trust trustees and governing bodies will;

- Recognise the importance of academy attendance and promote it across the academy.
- Ensure academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends and help academy leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure academy staff receive adequate training on attendance.

6. Daily Absence Procedure

At all Castleford Academy Trust academies, parents/carers are expected to inform the academy before the morning registration begins of their child's absence. This should be done by telephoning or emailing the contacts provided at the start of this policy.

If parents/carers have not contacted the academy, the academy will contact parents/carers of the absent pupil to enquire about the absence.

Parents/carers should contact the academy every day until the pupil returns to academy or alternatively indicate the length of the absence and the reasons why it is known the pupil will be unable to attend e.g. recovering from an operation.

Parents/carers are also requested to contact the academy, in advance to request any arranged absences, such as a hospital appointment or dentist. However, we request that as many routine appointments as possible are arranged out of academy hours.

Once morning registers are complete, the academy will run a daily attendance tracker report. This report identifies all pupils marked as absent, including those for whom no explanation has been provided by a parent or carer. It will also highlight any pupils who have had three or more consecutive session absences, such as both AM and PM absences over multiple days. The Attendance Team will review this report each day and determine the most appropriate next steps. These may include making direct contact with parents or carers by phone or email, conducting a home visit, referring the case to the Safeguarding Team, or escalating concerns to external agencies as appropriate.

Where no reason for absence has been provided by parents/carers, the following daily process will be followed:

1st day of absence- no reason provided	• Pupil recorded as absent from Register. • Staff responsible for attendance will send absence notification to parents/carers (telephone call or automated notification). • If no response from parent/carer, Attendance Team/DSL/SLT, to make decisions that may result in either direct telephone/email contact from the academy, or home visit (depending on level of risk).
2nd day of absence- Still no reason provided.	• Pupil recorded as absent from Register. • Staff responsible for attendance will send absence notification to parents/carers. • Attendance Team/DSL/SLT alerted to those pupils who have had a 2nd day of absence with no notification from parent/carer.

	• Any pupil who is deemed vulnerable will automatically be visited by academy staff on day 2 without contact, unless specifically advised not to do so by DSL.
3rd day of absence- continued no contact	• Pupil recorded as absent from Register. • Attendance Team send absence notification to parents/carers. • Attendance Team/DSL/SLT alerted to those pupils who have had a 3rd day of absence with no contact from parent/carers. • Home visit is completed for all pupils on 3rd day of absence without contact from parent/carer. The Home Visit Form is completed & CPOM submitted on return. • Discussion held with DSL/SLT to agree further action. (This may include repeated home visits, request for welfare checks from Police, DSL/SLT contacting Police/MASH etc).
10th day of absence- continued no contact	• CME Form completed. • Emailed securely to the Local Authority.

Welfare checks are undertaken on pupils who have had 5 continuous days of absence (excluding those with hospital admissions), including those where the academy has been informed of the absence by parent/carer. This is to ensure all children are regularly sighted. Any home visits undertaken result in CPOMS being submitted and Castleford Academy Trust Home Visit Form being completed upon return to the academy.

7. Punctuality

Any pupil who arrives after the closing of the register will need to sign in or signed in by a parent in primary. Those who arrive after the register has closed will be recorded on the register as code U (late after registers have closed) which will give them an unauthorised session absence.

8. Leave of Absence and Holidays During Term Time

The Trustees, Governors and Headteacher do not support parents/carers taking their children out of the academy for holidays.

Parents/carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of the academy during term time. Headteachers may only authorise leave in **exceptional circumstances**, in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance.

Parents/carers do not have a legal right to take children out of the academy during term time. Headteachers may only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances, in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance. Examples of exceptional circumstances include service personnel who are prevented from taking leave of absence outside term time at any point in the academy year, or the terminal illness or bereavement of a parent/carer or sibling if the absence is concurrent. If parents/carers wish to request a leave of absence or holiday during term time for exceptional circumstances, the request should, where possible, be made at least one month in advance by completing the 'Leave of Absence Request Form (including holidays during term time)- see Appendix 1.

Requests for leave of absence will be looked at on a case-by-case basis and it is up to the discretion of the Headteacher to make a decision about whether a request may be considered an exceptional circumstance or not. The Headteacher will inform the parent/carer in writing as to the decision made regarding the request.

If parents/carers decide to take their children on holiday where the absence is unauthorised, the academy will follow the Local Authority's Guidance for Academy's on leave of absence during term time, and inform the Education Welfare Service who may, on behalf of the Local Authority, issue a penalty notice.

As guidance for parents/carers it is important to note that holidays would not be authorised for the following reasons:

- Availability of cheap holidays.
- Availability of the desired accommodation.
- Holidays booked as surprises by family members.
- Overlap with beginning or end of term.
- Only time available due to work.

Holidays will not be authorised under any circumstances during formal examination or statutory assessment periods.

The Headteacher is advised to treat each application individually, and will consider the following factors when making a decision:

- The child's overall attendance record;
- Whether the absence falls during a year when public examinations or statutory assessments are due;
- The effect on the child's continuity of learning;
- The family circumstances;
- Sibling attendance at other Castleford Academy Trust academies or local academies (Headteachers will make a joint decision if there is a sibling attending another Castleford Academy Trust academy or Headteachers will liaise with the Headteacher of other local academies before making a decision).

When an absence is approved then it is an authorised absence. Should parents/carers keep their child away in excess of the agreed period, then the extra time will be treated as an unauthorised absence. An absence request for a holiday can only be made by the parent/carer with whom the child lives.

9. Leaving the Academy before the end of the day

It is not expected that pupils should need to leave early. However, in some exceptional circumstances, pupils may have to be collected early from the academy. Parents/carers who wish to collect their children early must inform the academy by telephone or in writing, stating clearly the reason why the child is leaving the academy. Requests may only be made by the parent/carer with day-to-day care. This safeguards against an estranged parent/carer making a request without the knowledge of the parent/carer who has care and control. If there are other arrangements in place for the child to leave the academy premises, such as another adult will collect the child, the academy must be informed in writing. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to keep the academy fully aware of contact details of named and responsible adults.

10. Collection at the end of the Academy day (not applicable to secondary academy pupils)

We do recognise that some of our pupils do have permission to either leave the academy independently at the end of the academy day or are transported home via pre-arranged taxi or bus. However, in the instance where arrangements are in place for a child to be collected, the following will apply:

- Children should be collected promptly at the end of the academy day.
- If someone other than the usual parent/carer is collecting the child, we ask that the academy office be notified in writing, in advance.

- Any child who is not collected at the end of the academy day will be directed to the academy office and contacts will be telephoned in order of priority to find out the reason for this. After 15 minutes' children will then be put into the academy after school childcare facility, where this is available, whereby parents/carers will be charged for this service. If parents/carers fail to collect their children by the academy closure time, with no contact from the parents/carers, then the local authority children's safeguarding team, along with the police may be contacted.

11. Attendance Monitoring

Each academy within Castleford Academy Trust monitors pupil attendance rigorously, following a graduated response approach. Whole-academy attendance is reviewed daily, and absence levels are analysed weekly using a centralised attendance tracker. This enables key staff to identify patterns of concern promptly and take appropriate action.

The Trust expects high levels of attendance from all pupils. When attendance begins to decline, early intervention is prioritised to provide support and reduce the risk of persistent absence. The graduated response (see Appendix 2) outlines the stages of intervention in detail, ensuring a consistent approach across all academies.

12. Persistent Absence

Where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, this is classed as persistent absence. This equivalent to a pupil missing 19 or more days during the academic year or 1 day or more every 2 weeks. Research also shows that persistently absent children are less likely to do well at school, are more likely to experience crime, either as a victim or perpetrator, struggle financially, and even suffer with poor health in later life.

13. Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices are issued where a parent or carer is considered capable of but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's academy attendance.

If the academy issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the academy will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- Whether any obligations that the academy has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay **£80 within 21 days**, or **£160 within 28 days.**

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay **£160 if paid within 28 days.**

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

(See Wakefield Authority Attendance Website for further details).

14. Notices to Improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but support is not working or parents/carers do not engage with offers of support, the academy may offer a notice to improve to give parents/carers a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school. They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

15. Removal from Academy Roll

A pupil will be removed from the academy roll in accordance with the regulations in The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations of 2006. These regulations include when:

- Parents/carers make a written request to the academy to home educate their child.
- Parents/carers make a written request for a change of academy, and the receiving academy confirms that they have started.
- They have been on a managed move and the academy they are attending has agreed to take them on roll.
- They have left at the end of Year 2/6/11

- They have been continually absent from the academy for a period of not less than 4 weeks and both the academy and the Local Education Authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil. This follows the Child Missing Education procedures.
- They are from the Traveller community and have been continually absent for a period of not less than 4 weeks.
- The family have moved out of commutable distance.

16. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

- Mark the registers in accordance with the law twice a day.
- Inform any parents/carers who have not contacted the academy, of the absence of their child on a particular day.
- Maintain records and monitor attendance of pupils on a regular basis.
- Authorise absences in accordance with the government guidelines. Please note that only the Headteacher can authorise absence.
- Contact parents/carers when the attendance falls below acceptable levels and/or when particular patterns of absence are causing concerns.
- Provide reintegration support for pupils returning from long-term absence.
- Maintain a range of strategies to encourage good attendance by means of rewards.
- Work with relevant external agencies if a pupils' attendance becomes a concern, i.e. Social Care, CAMHS, Education Welfare Service and The Police.
- Appoint a named Attendance Champion within the senior leadership team. The Attendance Champion will have overall responsibility for leading, monitoring, and promoting improvements in attendance across the school.
- Implement the trust's graduated response to attendance. This includes setting high expectations, monitoring attendance closely, identifying concerns early, working with families to understand and remove barriers, providing appropriate support, formalising interventions when needed, and applying legal measures where necessary.

17. Support Systems

Castleford Academy Trust recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a pupil's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in the academy. Parents/carers should make the academy aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in the academy, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the academy identify any additional support that may be required. The academy will work with pupils and parents/carers to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships, and working together to put the right support in place.

Castleford Academy Trust also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, and looked after children. The academy will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used may include:

- Discussion with parents/carers and pupils.
- Mentoring
- Attendance report booklets (secondary).
- Referrals to support agencies.
- Learning mentors.
- Pupil Voice activities.

- Friendship groups.
- PSHE/Personal Development.
- Reward systems.
- Time limited part time timetables.
- Additional learning support.
- Behaviour support.
- Reintegration support packages.

Particular focus will be given by all partners (academy based and external) to pupils who are absent from the academy more than they are present (those missing 50% or more). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in the academy or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partner agencies.

Where absence means pupils have missed 10% or more (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full academy year), the academy will work together with pupils and parents/carers to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, the academy will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of the academy as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

Support offered to families will be child centered and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents/carers and pupils. Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the academy will consider the use of legal sanctions.

18. Part-time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory academy age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at the academy or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents/carers. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the academy has agreed to a pupil being absent from the academy for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

19. How Data is Used

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's academy absence national statistics releases. The underlying academy-level absence data is published alongside national statistics. Academies within the Trust compare attendance data to the national average and share this with Governors and Trustees.

20. Children Missing in Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff in education provision should follow the provision's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly

on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential, pupils need to attend regularly. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less.

Castleford Academy Trust will ensure its academies maintain admissions and attendance registers. All pupils will be placed on both registers. The academies will use the national absence and attendance codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulations.

Castleford Academy Trust will promote good academy attendance and put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing in education.

All academies will inform the Local Authority of any pupil who fails to attend the academy regularly or who has been absent, without the academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 academy days or more. The academies will follow agreed safeguarding and child protection procedures where it is suspected that children missing from education are suffering from abuse or neglect. If there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the police will be involved.

21. Attendance Code

All academies within the Trust will comply with the statutory attendance codes as set out in Chapter 8 of the Department for Education Guidance, Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024 (or the most up to date version).

22. Appendix 1

Leave of Absence Request Form (including holidays during term time)

To the Headteacher of (please state the academy):		
I wish to apply for (insert names and class- primary or form- secondary of children):		
Child one:	Name:	Class/Form:
Child two:	Name:	Class/Form:
Child three:	Name:	Class/Form:
To be authorised as being absent from the academy for:		
Number of academy days:		
From (date):		
To (date) inclusive:		
Reason for request for absence during term time:		
If holiday request, please state the exceptional circumstances which mean that the holiday cannot be taken during school holiday:		
Parent/carer signature:		**Date:**
Print name:		

The academy will notify you by letter if the absence has been authorised.

If your child's attendance is below 95%, you may be asked to attend a meeting at school to discuss this.

NB: If a holiday is taken without it being authorised, the school is required to report the absence to the education welfare service who may issue a penalty notice.

School office use only					
Pupils current attendance:		**Parent/carer notified:**			
This absence is (indicate as appropriate):		**Authorised**		**Unauthorised**	
If unauthorised, please given reason below:					

Notes for Parents/Carers: Important Information Regarding Term-Time Leave and School Attendance
Please read the following information carefully before submitting any request for term-time leave.

Legal Responsibility

All children aged between 5 and 16 are required by law to receive an education. Under the Education Act 1996, it is the legal duty of parents and carers to ensure their child attends school regularly. Failure to do so can result in legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority.

Holidays in Term Time

You can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by, wherever possible, taking family holidays during official school holiday periods. We understand holidays are often more expensive outside of term time, but the law is clear: holidays are not considered *exceptional circumstances* and cannot be authorised during term time unless there is an *exceptional* reason.

Requests for leave must be made in advance to the school. The Department for Education has advised that schools *cannot* authorise any absences *after* they have taken place.

What You Should Consider

Each request will be considered individually, but parents should be aware that requests are unlikely to be authorised if:

- The request is for September or October (when settling and assessments take place)
- Your child's attendance is already a concern
- Your child is in Year 6 or Year 11
- There are upcoming tests, assessments, or exams
- There have been previous unauthorised absences
- The reason does not meet the threshold for exceptional circumstances

Unauthorised Leave and Penalty Notices

If you take your child out of school without prior authorisation or continue with a leave request after it has been refused, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence. You may then be subject to a penalty notice issued by the Local Authority:

- **First Offence:** £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days. This rises to £160 if paid after day 21 but within 28 days. Non-payment may result in referral to the Magistrates' Court.
- **Second Offence (within 3 years):** £160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. Non-payment may result in court proceedings.

- **Third and Further Offences (within 3 years):** The case may be taken straight to Magistrates' Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. This could lead to a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record, which can impact future employment.

Risk of Losing Your Child's School Place

If a leave of absence is unauthorised and your child does not return to school by the agreed date, the school is required to notify the Local Authority's Children Missing from Education (CME) team. This may result in your child losing their school place. Due to the shortage of school places in the area, this could mean having to accept a place at a school further away or being without a school place altogether—negatively affecting your child's education and potentially your employment.

Authorised Absence

The school may authorise absences for:

- Genuine illness (evidence may be requested).
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments (please try to book outside school hours).
- Days of religious observance.
- Bereavement or exceptional family circumstances.
- To see a parent who is on leave from the armed forces.

Unauthorised Absence Includes:

- Holidays or travel not approved by school.
- Looking after siblings or unwell family members.
- Shopping trips or birthdays.
- Weddings or celebrations.
- Days out or events, including sports and exhibitions.
- Arriving after the register has closed.

If you have any questions or need support regarding attendance, please contact the academy attendance officer.

23. Appendix 2

Attendance Graduated Response

Castleford Trust is committed to promoting excellent attendance so that every pupil has the best opportunity to succeed. This graduated response outlines how we expect high attendance from all pupils, with the support of parents. We monitor attendance rigorously to identify concerns early, listen and understand barriers through effective communication, provide informal support to help families overcome challenges, formalise support when needed through meetings and agreed plans, and enforce attendance requirements using legal penalties when necessary.

Stage	Trigger	Action	Letter	Monitoring
Good to Perfect Attendance	Attendance between 95% and 100%	Pupils in this category are eligible for rewards and attendance incentives. All pupils are encouraged to strive for 100%, and we set a trust-wide target of 97% (no more than six days absence across the year).		Form tutors (secondary) and class teachers (primary) monitor absence daily. They check in with any pupil returning from absence and regularly reinforce that every day in the academy counts.
Stage 1 – Early Identification	Attendance drops below 95%. In Term 1 only, this stage is triggered when a pupil has 4 or more days of absence (8 sessions)	• A Stage 1 letter is sent outlining the pupil's current attendance and reinforcing the importance of daily attendance for learning, confidence, and friendships. • The letter highlights the academy's 97% attendance target and encourages striving for 100%. • Parents are asked to discuss attendance with their child and contact school if support is needed. • If further absence is reported, the attendance officer may refer back to the Stage 1 letter and offer further support.	B1- Attendance Concern (Stage 1) B2- Attendance Concern (Stage 1 for term 1 pupils who were PA previous year)	The Attendance Team begins closer monitoring. Tutors and class teachers maintain daily check-ins with pupils and continue promoting positive attendance.
Stage 2- Informal Support	A further absence occurs within 10 weeks of the Stage 1 letter. Pupils with previous persistent absence may be escalated directly to Stage 3	• Parents/carers are contacted to highlight ongoing concerns. This may be via a Stage 2 letter or a phone call from a member of staff to offer informal support. • The communication will inform parents that their child has had further absence since the Stage 1 letter. • The communication shares the pupil's current attendance and missed days, and clearly outlines the proven link between low attendance and reduced academic outcomes. • A trust attendance leaflet (e.g., *Moments Matter, Attendance Counts*) may be shared with practical strategies for supporting attendance at home. • Parents are encouraged to speak with their child and contact school if they need support.	B3- Ongoing Attendance Concern (Stage 2) *This may be an informal support telephone call with parent/ carer rather than letter.	Attendance Team continue to track patterns closely. Tutors/class teachers maintain daily check-ins and encourage positive attendance habits.

		• It is made clear that further absence may result in an Attendance Support Meeting.		

Stage 3– Attendance Support Meeting	Attendance falls below 91%, and there is further absence after Stage 2.
	
	Pupils with significant prior attendance concerns (e.g., previously PA) may be escalated directly to this stage, bypassing Stage 2.
		• Parents/carers are invited to an Attendance Support Meeting to:
		  ○ Review the pupil's attendance to date
		  ○ Discuss and identify any barriers to regular attendance
		  ○ Agree a clear support plan to improve attendance
		  ○ Parents are informed that from this point; any further absences will be unauthorised unless supported by medical evidence until attendance improves to a satisfactory level.
		  ○ The meeting acts as a collaborative opportunity to offer support and set clear expectations.
		• Complete TAS referral as part of the Attendance Support Meeting.
		• If a parent/carer does not attend, the meeting will proceed in their absence, and a copy of the agreed plan will be sent to them.
		• A follow-up letter is sent after the meeting summarising outcomes and reiterating that 10 or more unauthorised absences within 10 weeks may lead a Notice to Improve, which could result in a Penalty Notice.
			B4- Attendance Support Meeting Invite (Stage 3)
			Appendix I – Attendance Support Meeting Minutes
			
			B5- Attendance Support Meeting Confirmation, parent attended (Stage 3)
			
			B6- Attendance Support Meeting Confirmation, parent not attended (Stage 3)
				The Attendance Team closely monitors attendance following the meeting.

Stage 4 – Formal Attendance Contract	Attendance concerns continue with further absences after stage 3.
	
	Pupils with significant prior attendance concerns (e.g., previously PA) may be escalated directly to this stage, bypassing Stage 2 and 3 where a attendance support plan has not previously worked or is not deemed appropriate.
		• Parents/carers are invited to a formal Attendance Contract Meeting to:
		  ○ Review the pupil's attendance following the Attendance Support Meeting
		  ○ Discuss and identify any new or persistent barriers to attendance
		  ○ The meeting should include the pupil if they are old enough to understand.
		  ○ The meeting should explain the purpose of an attendance contract and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances.
		  ○ Agree and sign an Attendance Contract to improve attendance.
		  ○ Parents are reminded that from this point; any further absences will be unauthorised unless supported by medical evidence until attendance improves to a satisfactory level.
		  ○ A copy of the Attendance Contract is given to parents at the end of the meeting.
		• Note- An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.
		• Where a parent fails to attend the meeting without good reason or notification, further attempts should be made to contact them and arrange another meeting but all attempts at support should be recorded on Arbour. Progress to stage 5 if no parental engagement.
			B7- Attendance Contract Meeting Invite (Stage 4)
			
			B8- Attendance contract confirmation letter
			
			Appendix T – Attendance Contract
				The Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) closely monitors attendance following the meeting.

Stage 5 – Notice to Improve (NTI)	10 or more unauthorised absences within a 10-week period. *Note- There is no obligation on the academy to offer an attendance contract at stage 4, as it may not be appropriate in every instance, but an attendance contract should always be explored before moving to stage 5.*	• A formal NTI letter is issued, setting out the legal implications and attendance expectations. • The pupil is prioritised for home visits when absences occur. • The AIO or designated member of staff follows up with a phone call to confirm receipt of the letter and offer further support.	B9- Notice to Improve (Stage 4)	Attendance is reviewed over a 4-week period by the AIO.
Stage 6 – Final Warning	No improvement following NTI and the 4-week review	• Parents/carers are invited to a final formal meeting with the AIO and/or SLT Attendance Champion. • This is the last opportunity to engage before legal escalation. • A Final Warning Letter is issued.	B10- Final Warning (Stage 5)	Ongoing tracking and engagement by the AIO.
Stage 7– Penalty Notice / Legal Action	Continued unauthorised absence despite all previous interventions	• A referral is made to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice **or** legal action- Education Supervision Order (ESO), parenting orders, magistrates court, section 444 1A aggravated offence. • All required documentation is submitted in line with the National Framework**.** • The academy continues to monitor and liaise with the LA as needed. • Please note: When a pupil's attendance drops to 50% or below, they are classed as severely absent. In such cases, Wakefield LA and the academy may consider this to be educational neglect. The academy will complete a MARF referral to Social Care Direct, and the safeguarding team will work with relevant agencies and the family under safeguarding procedures, rather than treating it solely as an attendance concern.	B11- Penalty Notice Referral (Stage 6)	Case is passed to the Local Authority, with school support continuing as required.