



Attendance Policy



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1. Aims of Policy

1.1. Carnforth High School recognises the clear link between attendance, punctuality, and attainment of our pupils. This policy aims to encourage the highest level of attendance for individual pupils, groups of pupils with certain characteristics (for example, vulnerable pupils), and whole school attendance.

1.2. Carnforth High School recognises that promoting excellent attendance and punctuality prepares pupils for successful future lives.

1.3. This policy covers the strategies used to improve attendance and punctuality and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of key staff and all stakeholders.

1.4. The guiding principles of the policy are listed below:

- To improve school attendance percentage this year (2025.26), with an overall target of 97%
- To raise the profile of attendance and make it a priority for staff, students, parents/carers, and the Governing Body
- To ensure the provision of appropriate and timely guidance and support for parents/carers, students, and staff
- To develop and monitor clear procedures for maintaining accurate registers. This is a priority following the purchase of SIMS Lesson Monitor.
- To provide a framework which staff can operate within to provide a consistent approach to raising levels of attendance, by using and working with relevant agencies as appropriate
- To provide a safe, caring, and compassionate environment where every pupil can access all opportunities offered to them
- To work with pupils and their families to ensure good attendance and punctuality to school
- To have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and make reasonable adjustments for pupils when required.

1.5. Our attendance culture

- Carnforth School has a solution-focused approach to overcoming barriers and improving attendance
- The clear link between attendance, attainment and future potential earnings is regularly communicated to pupils and parents.
- Each term an attendance report card is sent home to parents with progress reports
- Letters, postcards, emails, text messages, form time materials, letters to parents will communicate the importance of good attendance and celebrate successes regularly

- Parents and pupils can clearly track daily attendance and attendance over time on Class Charts
- School assemblies and form time PowerPoints include a focus on attendance for all pupils and for key pupil groups
- Rewards for forms and individuals for good attendance include letters home, Class Charts points, 100% attendance reward draw each term, emails and phone calls, end of half term celebrations
- Rewards for pupils with improved attendance including letters home, Class Charts points, 100% attendance reward draw each term, emails, and phone calls
- The Attendance manager meets with Year Leaders on a weekly basis to discuss attendance issues and plan intervention
- The Attendance Manager attends weekly Multi-Team Meetings with leaders from Behaviour, SEN, Progress & Pastoral to discuss pupils of concern and plan appropriate multi-team intervention.

2. Attendance Responsibilities

2.1. Expectations of parents

- Parents/carers are responsible for their child attending Carnforth High School regularly. (Education Act 1996)
- To ensure their child attends Carnforth High School in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To avoid keeping their child away from Carnforth High School for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation.
- To avoid arranging holidays during term time
- To immediately contact Carnforth High School by:

Phone (01524 732424 ext:2006) on the first day of any absence giving clear reasons

Email- attendance@carnforthhigh.co.uk

Text Message- School portal

Class Charts messaging service

- To contact Carnforth High School each subsequent day of absence to confirm their child's non-attendance and reasons
- To provide a letter with the child on their return to school and provide, where appropriate, medical evidence of illness
- Attend meetings at Carnforth High School, or allow a home visit, arrange by the school attendance team to discuss concerns regarding attendance.
- To inform the school without delay if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's education and school life that they feel is preventing attendance.

2.2. Expectations of Pupils

- To attend school on the days that Carnforth High School is open, dressed in full uniform, equipped to learn and on time (8.50am)

- To avoid being absent from school for any reason other than illness or other authorised absence
- To catch-up on any missed work whilst they have been absent from school, as arranged with their class teacher
- To inform their Form Tutor or Year Leader if they have any worries about any aspect of their education and school life, that they feel may hamper their attendance.

2.3. Expectations of Staff

The attendance manager is responsible for following the accurate recording of school registers, systems of intervention, monitoring persistently absent (PA) pupils and keeping attendance intervention tracking up to date. Attend weekly meetings with the Assistant Headteacher for Attendance and Headteacher to analyse year group data, individual data, and attendance plans, also to monitor impact of these plans.

Key tasks completed in conjunction with Year Leaders and SLT:

2.4. Attendance Manager

Daily

- Check and chase registers during form time/period 1
- Respond to and accurately record calls/messages around student absence
- Text parents/carers of students who are on their first day of absence but who have not contacted the school. Prioritise the most vulnerable children (CIN, CP, FSM/PP). These will be phoned on first day of absence
- Phone parents/carers of students who are on second day of absence but who have not contacted the school
- Raise any concerns about vulnerable pupils absent from school with DSL
- Conduct home visits to students who are on third day of absence but who have not contacted the school. Home visits to students who are below 90% attendance to support and work towards re-attendance as soon as possible. Home visits to CLA or vulnerable children who did not answer phone call on first day of absence
- Record attendance information on CPOMS for students with attendance concerns where appropriate
- Check and chase registers for period 4

Weekly

- Meet with Assistant Headteacher Attendance and Headteacher to go through weekly attendance plan and review current interventions
- Contact parents/carers where absences have remained unexplained despite previous intervention seeking and securing relevant evidence to explain the absence
- Administration of attendance letters, panel meetings, PN1 and PN2 request, PDR requests
- Maintain a register of students with attendance concerns (have met thresholds) to ensure attendance interventions are carried out accurately and timely
- Prepare detailed and accurate cases for court referrals. Liaise with the Court Officer to initiate proceedings and follow identified protocol

- Work closely with parents/carers of targeted students, forging positive and constructive relationships to engage parents/carers and provide support to get students to return to Carnforth High School at the earliest opportunity
- Keep in weekly contact with long-term absentees, accurately recording outcomes of communication on CPOMS and liaise with class teacher/year leader/Assistant Headteacher Attendance to ensure that effective reintegration strategies are used
- Identify pupil groups/individuals and cohorts and support Head of Year in working with these groups to bring down PA
- Prepare detailed and accurate cases for referral through the Early Help Assessment as discussed with the Headteacher. Attendance manager to act as the Lead Professional in these cases. Attendance manager to liaise with the Court Officer to initiate proceedings and to follow identified protocol
- Collaborate with the Local Authority Attendance Team to support local and national initiatives, request support with stuck cases and share details of pupils on reduced timetables.

2.5. Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for attendance

- To lead whole school attendance and directly line manage attendance manager
- Produce the weekly attendance plan through attendance data scrutiny. Set actions for attendance manager and year leaders to complete
- Weekly meeting with the attendance manager to review attendance plans and set new weekly/daily actions
- Ensure that the school's official attendance registers are compliant and in line with legal requirements. Any anomalies are reported to the Headteacher in the first instance during the working day
- Monitoring of PA against targets and administration of stage letter, panel meetings, and stage 1-4 interventions
- Ensure that parents/carers who may wish to withdraw their child from attending school are contacted with the potential consequences explained. Keep formal records on CPOMS
- Attend weekly Multi-Team Meetings (Headteacher, SENCO, Lead DSL, Assistant Headteacher & behaviour manager) to discuss most vulnerable students, to coordinate intervention
- To have full knowledge and understanding of all complex attendance cases. Year Leaders and attendance manager to produce case studies to provide a rationale as to the current situation and what support, impact or intervention has been provided
- Review/monitor impact of interventions and coordinate strategies across various departments
- Lead and support attendance meetings with parents/carers when requested
- Present regular attendance data to SLT and governors
- Continual review of attendance policy and procedures

- Lead Form Tutors to create a positive culture of promoting and celebrating good attendance and punctuality.

2.6. Year Leaders

- Phone parents/carers of students who are on their first day of absence but who have not contacted the school. Prioritise the most vulnerable children (CIN, CP, FSM/PP). These will be phoned on first day of absence
- Use weekly, half-termly and termly attendance data from the attendance manager to monitor the attendance of pupils within the year group, taking note of patterns amongst pupils from groups, identifying, and overcoming barriers
- Take appropriate steps such as meeting with pupils/parents/PSOs/agencies to support pupils and parents to reverse the trend of absence, identifying and implementing relevant pastoral support, closely and accurately monitoring, and measuring impact of support against attendance data
- Provide additional information during PASS meetings and weekly Multi-Team Meetings about potential barriers to attendance for students in their year group
- Develop good relationship with parents/carers of vulnerable students to help support and challenge them in improving their child's attendance
- Support the attendance manager in making home visits and action outcomes following visit
- Liaise with external agencies, where appropriate, to remove barriers to attendance for students in their year group
- Lead form tutors to create a positive culture of promoting and celebrating good attendance
- Foster a positive attitude to school attendance within year group, focusing on the message, through assemblies, notices boards and constant reinforcement with students
- Offer support in school to help encourage attendance, i.e. a referral to in school support or Early Help & Wellbeing etc.
- Monitor/mentor students who have been identified as those with deteriorating levels of attendance, using attendance report cards, short terms targets, rewards, home praise, and other strategies to improve attendance
- Effectively manage resources (finances) to overcome identified barriers with improving attendance i.e. alarm clock, toiletries, transport, uniform
- Lead on complex cases and if needed, being lead professional on CAFs and chairing TAFs
- Implement sanctions, in line with school behavioural policy, where there have been instances of truancy, whether from individual lessons or whole days
- Ensure all records are recorded accurately on CPOMS.

2.7. Form tutors

- Ensure that registers are taken accurately within the first 3 minutes of tutor time and are maintained accurately

- Mark lates accurately issuing detention and clearly communicating the sanction with the student.
- Encourage good attendance through constant reinforcement of individual and class targets during the 'Week Ahead' on Mondays. Create a competitive environment where students want to be the best attending form in the year/school.
- Liaise with the year leader and attendance officer as early as possible where they become aware of issues which may be acting as a barrier to attendance.
- Deliver form time materials with enthusiasm and create a safe and welcoming environment for all students. Forge positive and mutually respectful relationships with all students within the form to create a sense of belonging.

2.8. Class teachers

- Take accurate register within first 3 minutes of the lesson during the starter activity
- Maintain register accuracy during the lesson where pupils arrive after the initial 3 minutes
- Contact Climate Walk if a pupil's absence is not explained on Class Charts and the pupil is not present in their lesson
- Mark any pupil that is late. Use Class Charts to issue late mark
- Plan and deliver lessons that are adapted to meet the needs of the class and individuals. Engage pupils by providing suitable challenge, conducting assessments, and providing timely feedback
- Implement the school's behaviour policy, creating a safe, orderly, and purposeful environment where all pupils feel valued within the school
- Implement positive and negative behaviour points consistently and fairly. Develop a mutually respectful professional relationship with all pupils
- Where possible, ensure that work that is missed is caught up by providing class notes/handouts, and/or photocopy another pupil's work to be stuck into the absent pupil's book
- Acknowledge and appropriately celebrate a return from absence to further provide a sense of belonging to the class
- Proactively liaise with the pupil's Form Tutor or Year Leader if there are any concerns

2.9. Subject Leaders

- Develop schemes of learning and assessment that allow all pupils to access their curriculum
- Support class teachers in implementing the behaviour policy consistently and fairly
- Quality assure teaching and learning, and absence catch-up work through learning walks, work scrutiny, and pupil voice
- Support class teachers in ensuring any work missed through absence is caught up
- Monitor the progress of pupils who have/had attendance issues

2.10. Careers Coordinator

- Raise aspirations of all pupils who are identified by Year/Careers Lead and include in all one-to-one interviews, referencing each pupil's attendance record, the importance of good punctuality and good attendance in the school for all post-16 pathways.
- Prioritise poor attenders for careers interviews

2.11. **SLT**

- To be aware of the school's vulnerable children and who are PA whilst on Climate Walk
- Ensure pupils are punctual to timetabled lessons whilst on Climate Walk
- To be involved in departmental QA and focus on interventions for PA pupils
- Continually review curriculum provision to ensure that pathways are appropriate and accessible to meeting the needs of all pupils.

3. Thresholds and interventions

3.1. Attendance data of all students is analysed each week by the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher for attendance to identify trends in absence and students who are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee. A student will become a persistent absentee when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects.

3.2. To inform parents/carers about the Carnforth High School's concerns for their child's attendance the following system of interventions are put in place:

Less than 97%: After the first two weeks of the academic year, all parents/carers of students who attendance falls below our school minimum target of 97% are sent a letter stating our concerns and that we will be monitoring attendance. Students are set the target to get their attendance back above 97% and pastoral support will be implemented if required

For all monitored students whose attendance continues to decline, a second letter is sent to parents and carers to re-raise our concerns and offer any support with overcoming attendance barriers. These students may be placed on attendance report, an attendance contest or other pastoral support methods

If a monitored students attendance continues to be a concern, then a third letter is sent to parents and carers. This letter will clearly state that any further absences will be unauthorised unless accompanied with medical evidence. Continued pastoral support will be given and attendance monitored.

If a monitored student's attendance continues to fall following letter 3, then an attendance meeting will be scheduled. This is between Year Leader, Parents/Carers, and student. The meeting will look at the potential barriers to attendance and all three parties will look at solutions to reduce these barriers. Following this meeting, an attendance contract will be drawn up which all parties agree to. The contract may include a referral to external support agencies to provide more specialist support. This may be done through completing a process known as the 'Early Help Assessment'

- 3.3. If at this stage, attendance does not improve then this may result in the school referring the situation to the attendance legal team. The Local Authority request the school to provide information on persistent absence and whole school attendance on a termly/annual basis.

4. Punctuality

- The first bell rings at 8.50am. Pupils should be making their way to form time at this point. The school day starts at 8:55am
- Pupil entrances will be closed at 8:55am
- Any pupil arriving after 8:55am will have to sign in at reception, and will be issued a 15-minute later school detention for the following day
- Repeated lateness will be reported to parents. Repeated lateness after the register has closed may be dealt with in the same way as absence. Parents / carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice or even prosecuted in the Magistrates Court
- Parents are urged to contact school if they face problems with getting their child to school on time.

5. Absence

- 5.1. Authorised absence is where Carnforth High School has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence, only the school can do this.

- 5.2. Parents/carers should immediately contact the school by:
- Telephone- 01524 732424 ext:2006 (Attendance Office – Mr D Milner)
- Email- attendance@carnforthhigh.co.uk
 - Text Message- School portal
 - Class Charts messaging service

This should be done on the first day of absence by 8:50am, giving clear reasons. A phone call must be made for each further day of absence. This is a safeguarding practice to ensure students are not marked as absent in advance when parents/carers expect them in school.

- 5.3. Absence may be authorised for such reasons as:

- Illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement
- Days of religious observance
- Study leave involvement in a public performance
- Elite athlete activities

- 5.4. Absence will not be authorised for such reasons:

- Looking after siblings, unwell parents, or carers
- Birthdays

- Family holidays where permission has not been granted (please note that family holidays during term time will not normally be approved)
- Special occasions, where the school does not agree that the absence should be granted.

5.5. Medical and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, pupils should, where possible, come to the school before the appointment, sign out and return to the school after the appointment

5.6. Confirmation of all appointments by way of appointment card, letter or appointment slip must be provided for any absence to be authorised. If medical appointments are to be attended at the start of the day, causing the pupil to arrive late to school, confirmation of the appointment (as above) must be provided, or a late detention will be issued

5.7. Following an explanation from parents regarding a pupil's absence, the school will decide whether it accepts the explanation and authorise accordingly

5.8. Home visits and welfare checks

A pupil missing from education without a valid reason is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Where school has received notification that a pupil is absent without a valid reason; hasn't been able to contact the pupil's parent/carer; or has received a response from parents that it is concerned about; school will undertake a home visit to the pupil's home to check that they are safe and well. This will involve staff from school attending the pupil's home address in person and talking to the pupil and parents to understand the reasons for absence

5.9. Where a pupil is absent from education on a long-term basis the school will take steps to undertake regular welfare checks on the pupil to; ensure that they are safe and well; ensure that the family can continue to access support from the school; to allow the school to understand what steps it can take to remove any barriers to education

5.10. When school visits a pupil's home address and there is no answer, school will leave a letter to inform parents of the visit

5.11. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider further actions, or support should it be required

5.12. Children Missing in Education

The school's Attendance Manager will notify Lancashire's Children Missing Education Team when pupils have missed 10 consecutive school days without permission (or sooner if school are aware that the pupil is not going to return e.g. moved out of area) via the CME referral form.

- 5.13. The school's attendance manager will complete a CME removal from roll and/or provide Lancashire (offroll@lancashire.gov.uk) with the relevant details where a pupil has been removed from roll and a start at a new school has been confirmed or where the CME Team has advised the school that removal from roll is authorised.

5.14. **Penalty Notices**

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), and other external agencies can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

The school will notify the local authority to issue a penalty notice.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school 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 school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents 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.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve are issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for Lancashire County Council.

They include:

- Details of the pupils' attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 are significant.
- 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 does not improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, 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

6. Attendance Codes – Meaning and Description

Code	Meaning	Type
/	Present at school, morning	Present mark
\	Present of school, afternoon	Present mark
A	Present at school but not in timetabled class	Present mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present mark
C	Authorised Circumstance	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Education at a secure/residential site - Off-site direction/managed move	Present mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised absence

N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances – any other absence not authorised by the school	Unauthorised absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend