



Castle Donington College

Attendance Policy

Date agreed by the Local Governing Body: 20th May 2024

Date for review: Autumn Term 2024

Castle Donington College follows Guidance and Advice given by the Local Authority and Government when writing policies; in light of this, changes may need to be made after the adoption of this policy and prior to the review date. Data will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set out in the General Data Protection Regulation.

Safeguarding

At Castle Donington College, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. Each pupil's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children may be especially vulnerable. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and, within the context of the college, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for pupils encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety and access to a broad curriculum offer with suitable adaptations to ensure access for all pupils.

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to college attendance through our whole-college culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- promoting good attendance;
- reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence;
- ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- acting early to address patterns of absence;
- building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend college.

Castle Donington College **pupils** are expected to:

- Attend the school regularly and on time.
- Attend all lessons punctually

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of [working together to improve college attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [college attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

The **Governing Body** is responsible for:

- promoting the importance of college attendance across the college's policies and ethos;
- making sure college leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;
- regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data;
- monitoring attendance figures for the whole college;
- making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance;
- holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

The current link governor with responsibility for attendance is Malcolm Graham (Safeguarding Governor).

The **principal** is responsible for:

- implementation of this policy at the college;
- monitoring college-level absence data and reporting it to governors;
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies;
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The **senior leader for attendance** is responsible for:

- leading and promoting attendance across the college;
- offering a clear vision for attendance improvement;
- evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes;
- having an oversight of data analysis;
- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues;
- creating intervention re-integration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers;
- delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families;

The current senior leader for attendance is Nathan Barratt (Vice Principal and Senior DSL).

The **attendance officer** is responsible for:

- monitoring and analysing attendance data;
- benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- providing regular attendance reports to college staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader for attendance and the principal;
- working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence;
- advising the principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The current attendance officer is Ramandeep Kaur.

Teachers and form tutors are responsible for:

- promoting good punctuality and attendance with pupils and parents/carers;
- recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office through the college system.

School administrative / reception staff are responsible for:

- taking calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording information on the college system;
- transferring calls from parents/carers to the attendance officer, pastoral staff or Heads of Year in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

4. Recording attendance

4.1. Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of each day during tutor time (the start of the morning session) and at the start of each lesson. Registers taken during period 4 will represent the start of the afternoon session. It will make whether each pupil is:

- present;
- attending an approved off-site educational activity;
- absent;
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- the original entry;
- the amended entry;
- the reason for the amendment;
- the date on which the amendment was made;
- the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- whether the absence is authorised or not;
- the nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity;
- the nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm and will be kept open until 1.00pm.

4.2. Unplanned absence

A pupil's parent/carer must notify the college of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible. This can be done by telephone (01332 810528) or email (attendance@cdcollege.uk).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the college has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than five days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the college will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the college is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3. Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of college hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of college for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Details of which term-time absences the college can authorise are outlined in section 5.

Applications for term-time absence should be made by using the absence request form in appendix 2 and available on the school website.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1. Approval for term-time absence

Valid reasons for term-time absence are:

- illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong (if necessary, the college will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart);
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the college, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. The college will liaise with the Traveller Education Coordinator in the Local Authority to ensure accuracy of reporting.

The principal will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time outside these reasons if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Term-time absence for the following will not be authorised:

- birthdays;
- minding the house or caring for younger siblings;
- shopping;
- no school uniform;
- to do homework or coursework;
- holiday.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the college website. The principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.2. Legal sanctions

The college or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the principal, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- the number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year;
- one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission;
- where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Fostering good attendance is shared responsibility of college, the parent/carer, and the local authority. Parents/carers have a responsibility to see that their children receive the appropriate education and are responsible for their child attending school.

In order to encourage high levels of attendance, the college will:

- deliver a curriculum, which is relevant, motivating and adapted to the needs of the pupils;
- communicate and maintain high expectations;
- employ the college's systems of reward for personal and academic achievement;
- using sympathetic re-integration strategies for long-term absentees.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 First day contact

The attendance officer will contact home for pupils on the first day they are absent from school should the absence be unexplained. Initially, this will be done by text message.

For pupils who are particularly vulnerable (including those who have previously truanted) or where a prompt response is not received, this will be followed up by telephone.

If a response is still not received, college staff will make a home visit and, if deemed appropriate, contact the police or social care.

7.2. Monitoring attendance

The college will:

- monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level;

- identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The college will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Governing Body.

7.3. Analysing attendance

The college will:

- analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families;
- look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.4. Using data to improve attendance

The college will:

- provide regular attendance reports to school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

7.5. Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The college will:

- use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the college (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school;
- provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- child protection and safeguarding policy;
- behaviour policy;

Appendix 1: attendance codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
Present and approved educational activity		
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Other codes		
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Absence request form

CASTLE DONINGTON COLLEGE

APPLICATION BY A PARENT / CARER FOR A CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE COLLEGE DURING TERM TIME

Pupil's Name		Tutor Group	
Home Address			

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from the college during the following dates:

Date of last day at the college		Return date to the college	
Total number of school days missed			

Could you please explain the circumstances that make it necessary to take this absence during term time.

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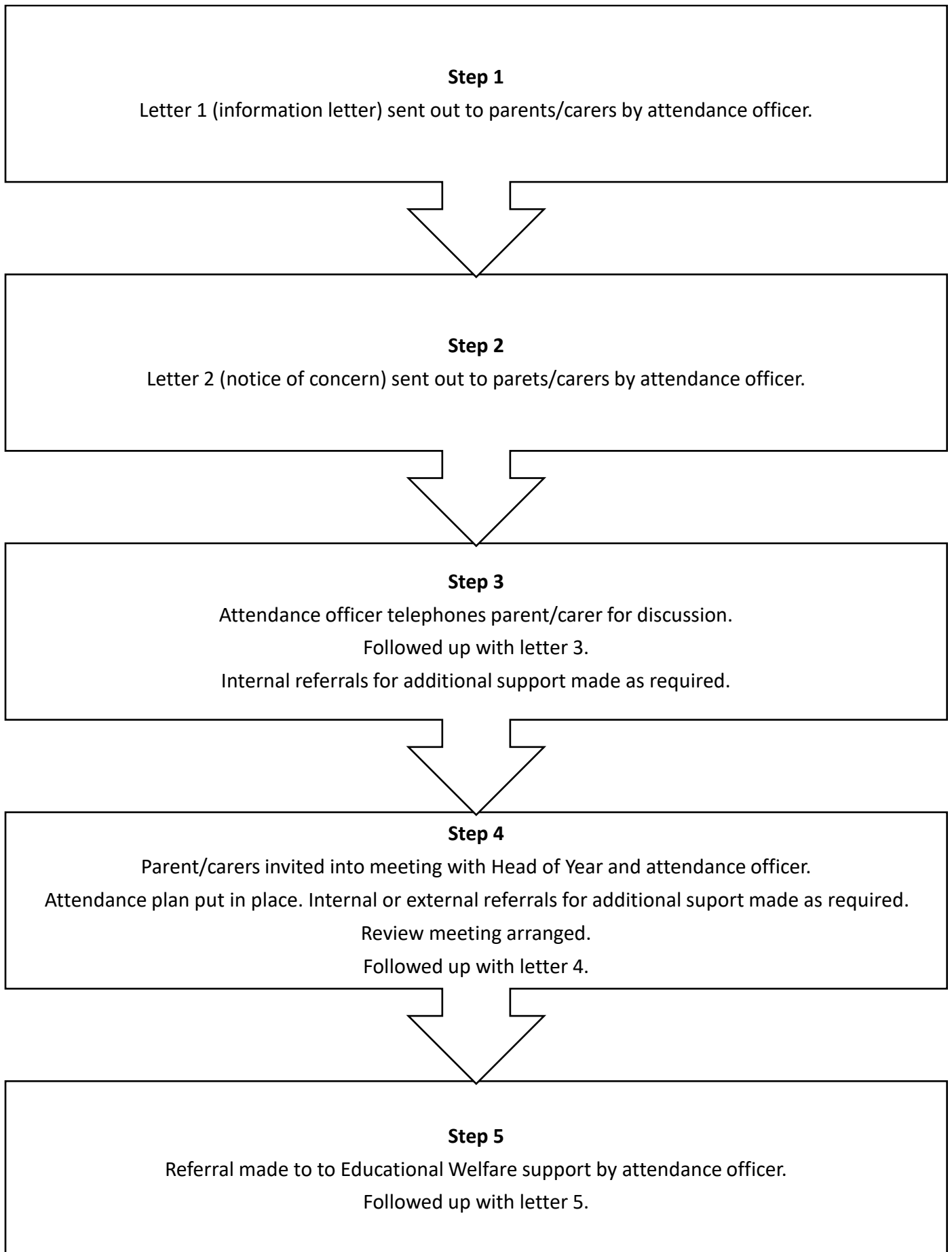
I make the application for my child named above to have authorised absence from the college for the reasons stated. I have read and understand the college attendance policy, including in regard to the authorisation of term-time absences. I understand that, if this request is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance.

Name of parent / carer making application			
Signed		Date	

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO THE COLLEGE (FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER) GIVING AT LEAST TWO SCHOOL WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE.

Please do not book or pay for any activity until you know that that the college will authorise your child's absence.

Appendix 3: Staged process to address attendance concerns



Appendix 4: Attendance plan

**CASTLE DONINGTON COLLEGE
ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Pupil's Name		Tutor Group	
Parent / carer(s)			
Plan date		School lead	
Review date		Other staff involved	

ATTENDANCE SUMMARY – YEAR TO DATE

Present (including AEA)	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence	Lates

BARRIERS OR CONCERNS

Pupil	
Parent / carer	
School	

AGREED ACTIONS

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

NOTES / ADDITIIONAL INFORMATION

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