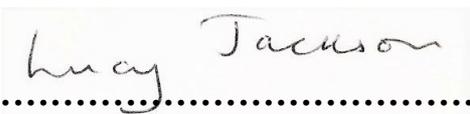


# CAISTOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by Full Governing Body on .....

Reviewed.....18 May 2020.....

Signed..........

Chair of Governors

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### 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

**Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence**

**Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled**

**Acting early to address patterns of absence**

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

- We are justifiably proud of our record of student attendance when it has consistently been in the top three schools in Lincolnshire over many years.
- The Governing Body of Caistor Grammar School are committed to doing all that the reasonably can to promote good attendance at the School.
- The School, through its development of this policy and many other statements, such as the Headmaster’s regular newsletters and the Guidelines to the Partnership for the parents of students at Caistor Grammar School, seek to make clear to the whole School community how highly student attendance is valued and how much the Governors wish to discourage parents from taking their children out of school during term time.
- The School seeks to achieve a whole school attendance for Years 7-13 of 95%.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. School procedures

### 3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and at the start of the second session. It will mark whether every 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day. (Bus services can be late; if this is the case students must go to reception and sign in with reception.)

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 8.55am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.05pm and will be kept open until 1.10pm.

### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents can notify school by email ([absence@caistorgrammar.com](mailto:absence@caistorgrammar.com)) or by contacting the school phone number. An answerphone enables parents to leave a message.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide 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 school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents complete a medical absence form (insert link from website). The student presents the form to the form tutor for approval and the form then goes to the School office. An absence mark is entered into the SIMS register.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance and are approved by the Headmaster, or in his absence, the Deputy Head. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### **3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

Punctuality is identified as being one of the determiners of a well-ordered school where learning is a priority. Form tutors are expected to be at their form room in good time to be able to take an electronic register.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. Safeguarding calls for unexplained absences commence at 9.15am. Parents/carers of students in Years 7-11 are contacted first.

An absence list is sent to all staff as soon as possible in the morning to enable staff to monitor attendance for each lesson. An absence list can be distributed in the afternoon if a student is absent for an afternoon session.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

Attendance is recorded on written reports which are issued once to each year group at staggered points in the year. Form tutors are encouraged to cite outstanding or concerning attendance in their comment. An end of year attendance report is issued for all students. Students that have achieved full attendance will receive a certificate.

#### **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

##### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as compassionate grounds (e.g. visiting a terminally ill parent or sibling) and funerals, family celebrations (degree ceremonies for parents), etc. (The Headmaster will use his discretion and will explain to parents, preferably by telephone, why an absence will be unauthorised).

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion and often following discussion with the parents.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

University open day visits/ offer days (students can have a maximum of four days from May half-term to Y13 mock exams in January)

University/ job/ college interviews

External examinations (music, drama, GCSEs/ A level courses not taught at the School).

The school monitors the attendance of all students. Every half-term the Assistant Head monitors attendance for demographic groups, including Non-White British, SEN and Pupil Premium students. The information is passed onto the Heads of Section, who then make contact with parents where attendance has fallen below 90% and for where there is no justifiable reason (e.g. recuperation from an operation, long term illness, etc.)

**Study leave** – study leave is not granted by default, and is only granted to pupils in Year 11 and Year 13. Provision will still be made available for pupils who wish to revise in school.

##### **4.2 Legal sanctions**

The decision as to whether or not to submit a penalty notice to the local authority ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

A 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.

The threshold for submitting an unauthorized absence penalty notice to county is 15% of unauthorized absence in a six week period.

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

The School wishes to work with parents in the case of students that are ‘persistently’ absent. Meetings are held as appropriate.

## **6. Attendance monitoring**

Heads of Section monitor pupil absence.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents are expected to call the school on each day of the students’ absence.

If a pupil’s absence goes above five days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If, after, contacting parents a pupil’s absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the county average. Attendance data is shared with governors at Full Governor meetings.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

When whole school attendance falls below 95% the issue is discussed at the Curriculum and Student Welfare committee. Whole school attendance statistics are reported in the Headmaster’s report at Full Governors’ meetings.

### **7.2 The Headmaster**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **7.3 The Heads of Section**

**Monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level**

**Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher**

**Work with the DSL to improve attendance of those students on the Safeguarding register.**

**Work with the SENCO to improve attendance of those students on the SEND register. Work with the Assistant Head (Director of Studies) to resolve attendance of those Pupil Premium students.**

## **Tackle persistent absence**

**Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues when attendance falls below 90% or if there is a pattern emerging (e.g. absent every Monday morning.)**

### **7.4 Form tutors**

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office via SIMS.

### **7.5 Administration staff**

Administration staff take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headmaster. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Curriculum and Student Welfare committee before being passed to the Full Governor meeting.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to the following additional policies

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	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
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