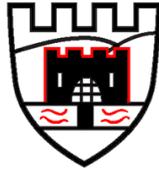


Castle Camps C. of E. (V.C.) Primary School



Policy for Attendance

**Date Approved by the Governing Body:
22nd September 2025
Date for Review: September 2026**

Castle Camps C of E (V.C.) Primary School

Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

Every day missed from school is a lost opportunity. Requests for holidays during term time have increased and it is important that parents are aware that these will be refused unless there are really exceptional circumstances. If a child is taken away for a two week holiday every year and has the average number of days off for sickness and appointments, by the time they leave secondary school at 16 they will have missed a year of school.

The Headteacher will be monitoring attendance closely and parents of any child whose attendance is seen to be of concern below a level of 90% will be contacted by the school.

Castle Camps C of E (V.C.) Primary School aims to:

- raise levels of achievement and behaviour by ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in the school.
- ensure that every pupil has access to the education to which they are entitled.
- be proactive in addressing early patterns of absence.

2. Legal and National Context

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 make clear that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. The School upholds these regulations and applications for holiday or leave during term time will not be authorised. To avoid difficulty or disappointment, parents are asked to refrain from such requests.

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The amendments described below came into force on 1st September 2013

Penalty notices (fines) may be issued to each parent who fails in accordance with the code of conduct drawn up by the Local Authority to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days; or £120 within 28 days to Cambridgeshire County council.

3. Implementation

The School will:

- ensure that school policy with regard to term-time holidays is clearly stated in the school prospectus, on the school website and is communicated to parents on an annual basis.
- remind parents of the importance of ensuring their children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance.
- discourage parents from arranging holidays during term-time.
- unequivocally remind parents that they do not have any right or entitlement to expect term-time leave to be granted and that all leave is granted at the discretion of the Headteacher (or those authorised to exercise discretion on his behalf).
- advise parents that if leave is taken without authorisation, it will be recorded in the school attendance register as unauthorised absence, and that the matter may be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.
- advise parents that non-attendance or absence that is unauthorised and that attendance which falls below 90% will result in contact from the school; attendance below 85% could result in parenting contracts, or legal enforcement including Penalty Notices, School Attendance Orders, Education Supervision Orders or prosecution.
- provide attendance data on the termly Headteacher's report.
- report on attendance to Governors.
- pass on attendance data to Linton Village College/the appropriate secondary school.
- in the event of a child's absence, the school reserves the right to confer with other educational establishments to ascertain whether siblings are also absent.

4. Promoting Attendance

The school uses opportunities as they arise to remind parents and pupils of the importance of attendance for instance through parent information evenings and the school prospectus. Attendance is also celebrated through collective worship and presentation evenings.

4.1. The Headteacher will:

- give attendance a high profile at assemblies
- on a half-termly basis monitor pupil attendance in each class
- meet with parents to discuss attendance problems as soon as they are identified
- use a system of warning letters which will be sent to the parents of poor attendees
- ensure that the class teacher provides work for excluded students and long-term absentees
- look for patterns of absences and consider impact of curriculum upon attendance alongside other possible causes
- work with the Senior Leadership Team, EWO and SENCO, to address poor pupil attendance.

4.2. Teachers will:

- be a good role model for pupils
- take prompt action when pupils are late or absent without explanation, recording lateness and referring to the school office and then Headteacher (if this happens on a recurring basis)
- keep an accurate register
- inform the Headteacher when absence is causing concern

4.3. The school office will:

- oversee administration of the SIMS Register system
- contact parents of any child whose absence is unexplained by phone by 11.00 am
- keep parents informed of any unexplained absences before they become unauthorised
- support the work of the Headteacher and SLT by providing regular attendance information
- liaise with teachers to monitor accuracy of record keeping
- keep the Headteacher informed on a half-termly basis or as and when a pupil absence concern arises
- keep the Headteacher informed of inaccurate marking of staff registers as part of an alert system for staff who may not be maintaining accurate recording of registers.

4.4. Class Teachers will:

- maintain an accurate daily class register
- alert the Headteacher if there are concerns over pupil absence

4.5. Parents will:

- ensure that children leave for school on time every day
- provide a written explanation for children's absences from school in the planner (year 6 pupils only) or by letter/email
- endeavour not to take children out of school in term time
- notify the school as soon as problems arise with child's attendance
- if no letter has been sent in advance, telephone the school on the first morning and every subsequent morning that their child is absent

4.6. Pupils will:

- arrive by 9am for registration
- give the office/ teachers any notes from their parents to explain absences
- report to the office if they are late arriving for school
- inform their class teacher and office if they need to leave during any part of the school day other than at the close of school.
- tell their teacher/a member of the Senior Leadership Team if they are having any problems attending school.

5. The work of Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The school and EWO always endeavour to work with students and parents at an early stage to resolve problems. This is nearly always successful. However, the EWO also has a legal role and if other ways of resolving attendance have failed, these officers can use legal sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates court.

6. Sanctions for Poor Attendance and Punctuality

The School reserves the right to use any of the following sanctions to fulfil its obligations with respect to school attendance:

- Parent meetings
- Parent Contracts
- Penalty notices

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school offering the parent the opportunity to enter into a parenting contract following a pupil's truancy or non-attendance under section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school instigating a Penalty Notice under section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (instigated by the Principal and Deputy and Assistant Principals authorised by them, or so authorised by the Local Authority).

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The amendments described below came into force on 1st September 2013

Penalty notices (fines) may be issued to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days; or £120 within 28 days

Parenting orders, Education Supervision Orders or Penalty Notices can also be issued.

Prosecution by the Education Welfare Service on behalf of the LA.

Policy adapted by: Miss A. O'Connor

Appendix A: Procedure for reporting absence

1. If a child is absent from school the following procedures are required:

1.1. First and subsequent days of absence

- The school office is notified by telephone: 01799 584270 or an email is sent to office@castlecambs.cambs.sch.uk. Information is provided, including the reason for absence, student name and class.
- Each subsequent day that the child is not in attendance, the school must be informed as above.
- On return to school, the parent **provides a note** with an explanation for absence, unless the reason has already been provided via school email.

1.2. Third day absence

- If the child is absent for three days, further contact with the school team is required by the parent to provide details about the due date for a return to school by the pupil.

1.3. Continued absence

- In the case of longer term absence, the school office is to be informed so that appropriate work or support can be provided.

1.4. Ten days' absence

- A pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. This is a legal requirement.
- For pupils with a medical reason for absence details should be obtained from a qualified medical practitioner. Appropriate work and support should be offered.

2. If a child needs to be absent during the school day the following procedures are required.

- Parent to contact the school on 01799 584270 or by email to inform of reason for absence during the day, e.g. dental appointment.
- The pupil must report to the school office on departure and report again to the office on their return.

3. School action in the case of pupil absence

- On each day of absence, the school office will use telephone contact to confirm absence with the parent if contact has not already been made.
- A member of the Senior Leadership (SLT), accompanied by the Education Welfare Officer is likely to make a home visit in cases that are deemed 'at risk' of poor attendance.
- In the case of pupil attendance that is deemed 'at risk', the parent will be invited to school to discuss absence and actions for improving attendance.
- In the case of a pupil absence moving towards the 85% Persistent Absence (PA) level, the parents of the child will be contacted by the Headteacher or a member of the SLT.

Appendix B: Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable at Castle Camps C of E (V.C.) Primary School. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss vital work and information. Lateness is also disruptive to lessons.

1. The School day

The school day starts with registration at 9 am. Pupils are expected to be in their classrooms by this time. Any pupil who arrives after this time is registered as late and minutes late will be recorded.

Registers are closed as soon as they are called. A pupil who is late after this time will be marked late by their teacher and on arrival, should report to the school office.

If a pupil arrives late at school, for example due to a dental appointment, a parental note must accompany the child on their return and given to the school office. In this case the absence will be recorded as authorised.

Appendix C: Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, either as authorised or unauthorised absence.

1. Authorised absences

Authorised absences are approved by the Headteacher. An example of an authorised absence that may be approved would be a morning or afternoon away from school for a reason such as illness or medical/dental appointments that unavoidably fall within the school day, or a sporting commitment drama, dance or music examination or competition. At the Headteacher's discretion, the School reserves the right to request proof of the reason for absence.

All absence requests must be made on the school Leave of Absence form and be addressed to the Headteacher.

2. Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which permission has not been given. This includes:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- unexplained absence
- pupils who regularly arrive late, after registration has closed
- holidays/days off school
- pupils staying off school for invalid reasons such as shopping, caring for siblings, etc

This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings

3. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 15% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. The school monitors all absence thoroughly. If a child's absence is deemed to be 'at risk' of PA, the parent will be informed of this by the Headteacher. PA pupils are tracked through the pastoral system, combined with academic monitoring. All PA cases are made known to the Educational Welfare Officer. Pupils at risk may also be referred to the Parent Support Adviser, who works with families to provide support and strategies to encourage attendance.

**CASTLE CAMPS C OF E (V.C.) PRIMARY SCHOOL
APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME**

As a parent/carer you are strongly urged to avoid taking your child out of school during term time. Please note the following before applying for leave of absence from school:

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

There is no longer provision in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time. The regulations make clear that (OMIT principals/head teachers) head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

If you believe that there are exceptional circumstances that warrant the need to take your child out of school during term time, please complete this form and return it to the Headteacher, providing at least 10 school days notice, where circumstances allow.

Please note that if leave is taken after permission has been withheld then this will be recorded as unauthorised absence on the school register and may result in the serving of a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority or possible legal proceedings.

I request that the following student (s) (please include siblings at Castle Camps C of E (V.C.) Primary School)

NAME OF PUPIL (S) _____

YEAR/ CLASS (S/ ES) _____

be granted leave of absence from Castle Camps C of E (V.C.) Primary School from
_____ **to** _____

Total number of school days absent (excluding weekends etc.) _____ **days**

I need to take my child out of school during term time because (please give as much details as possible):

Signature of parent/carer _____ **Date** _____

Permission authorised sent	Yes/No	Registers noted	Yes/No	Copy
Signature of Headteacher _____				
Date _____				

**PENALTY NOTICES
NON-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY**

COUNCIL

LOCAL AUTHORITY CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

1. Under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 local education authority officers, headteachers and the police have the discretionary power to issue Penalty Notices to the parents of who children who truant.
2. The new power provides an alternative to prosecution of parents under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days.
3. Should the Penalty Notice remain unpaid or have been paid only in part at the end of the 28 day period Cambridgeshire County Council must prosecute the parents for the offence to which the notice relates, or, in specified circumstances (see section 29 below), withdraw the notice.
4. Penalty Notices may only be issued in Cambridgeshire in accordance with the terms of this Code of Conduct. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure that the power is applied fairly and consistently across the County Council and that suitable arrangements are in place for the effective and efficient administration of the scheme.
5. In implementing this Code of Conduct the County Council will liaise when appropriate with neighbouring education and police authorities.
6. This Code of Conduct has been drafted in accordance with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004: Statutory Instrument 2004 No 181 and guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills.
7. In preparing this Code of Conduct the County Council has consulted with Cambridgeshire headteachers and the Chief Officer of Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

1B Circumstances in which Penalty Notices may be issued

8. A Penalty Notice may be issued in cases of non-school attendance. Such a notice is intended to offer a rapid intervention, which may be used to address non-school attendance before it becomes entrenched.
9. Penalty Notices may only be issued in relation to absence from school, which is unauthorised. The County Council's recommended criteria for authorising/not authorising absence can be found in the Local Authority School Attendance Policy. (All Cambridgeshire schools are encouraged to adhere to the criteria detailed within this policy.)
10. Penalty Notices may only be issued in relation to a child whose attendance at school has been below 85% over the previous 4-week period.
11. The key consideration in deciding whether to issue a Penalty Notice should be whether it is considered likely to be effective in helping the child to whom it relates to return to regular attendance.

12. Before issuing a Penalty Notice due consideration should be given to other strategies which may help return the child concerned to regular school attendance. Such strategies might include:
 - a) writing to the child's parents to remind them of their legal responsibilities;
 - b) meeting with the child's parents;
 - c) ensuring a first-day response to any absence;
 - d) setting targets for improvement;
 - e) referral to the Education Welfare Officer;
 - f) involvement of other services/agencies.
13. The usual response to a first offence would be to warn the parent rather than to issue a Penalty Notice. Authorised officers do, however, have the discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence. Such exceptional circumstances could be where the unauthorised absence had been for an extended period of time and condoned by the parent.
14. Headteachers and police officers should only issue a Penalty Notice following consultation, discussion, reflection and joint decision with a County Council Education Welfare Officer.
15. The Education Welfare Officer will not agree to sanction the issuing of a Penalty Notice unless he/she considers that with regard to the offence to which it relates there is sufficient evidence to secure a conviction under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Evidence could be letters sent to parent, minutes of meetings and record of telephone conversations.
16. A maximum of three Penalty Notices may be served on any one parent over a 12- month period.
17. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice. A parent should therefore, if possible, be given warning of the possibility of a notice being issued in order to allow him/her to make representations should he/she wish to do so.

2B Authority to Issue a Penalty Notice

18. An Education Welfare Officer may issue a Penalty Notice to the parent of a child who is a registered pupil at a school in Cambridgeshire or who is a registered pupil at a school in an authority, which has an agreement to that effect with Cambridgeshire County Council.
19. A headteacher or an authorised deputy or assistant headteacher may issue a Penalty Notice to the parent of a child who is registered at his/her school, in consultation with a CCC Legal Panel.
20. A police officer, including a community support officer or other accredited person, may issue a Penalty Notice.
21. Headteachers and police officers should comply with the terms of this Code of Conduct when issuing a Penalty Notice and should provide a copy of any notice issued to the relevant Education Welfare Officer.

3B Form and Content of Penalty Notices

22. A Penalty Notice should give the following particulars alleged to constitute the offence to which the notice relates and should contain:
- a) the name and address of the person to whom the notice is issued;
 - b) the name and address of the child who is failing to attend school regularly and the name of the school at which he/she is a registered pupil;
 - c) the name, title and official details of the authorised person issuing the notice;
 - d) the date of the offence and of the issue of the notice;
 - e) the amount of the penalty which is to be paid and details of the timescales and any variation involved;
 - f) the address of the County Council office at which the penalty is to be paid and to which any correspondence relating to the notice may be sent;
 - g) the method/methods by which payment may be made;
 - h) the specified period within which the penalty should be paid;
 - i) a statement that full payment within the specified period will discharge any liability for the offence;
 - j) an explanation of the consequences should the penalty not be paid in full before the expiry of the specified period;
 - k) an explanation of the grounds on which the notice may be withdrawn.
23. Should there be more than one person liable for the offence a separate notice should be issued to each person.
24. Should the offence involve more than one child a separate notice should be issued for each child.

Service of Penalty Notices

25. A Penalty Notice may be served by:
- a) giving it to the recipient; or
 - b) leaving it at the recipient's usual or last-known address; or c) sending it to the recipient at that address by first-class post.
26. Service by post is deemed to have been effected, unless the contrary is proved, on the second working day after posting the notice by first-class post.

Failure to Pay a Penalty Notice

27. Should the recipient of a Penalty Notice fail to pay the full amount before the expiry of the period for paying it the County Council will either begin proceedings against the parent under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice in accordance with specified conditions (see section 29 below).
28. A certificate signed by the Attendance & Behaviour Manager to the effect that the recipient of a Penalty Notice has or has not paid the amount due on or before the date specified should be retained and presented as evidence in any subsequent Section 444 Education Act 1996 proceedings.

Withdrawal of a Penalty Notice

29. A Penalty Notice may be withdrawn by the County Council, regardless of whom within the authority issued it, if it is deemed that:
- a) the notice ought not to have been issued (i.e. where it has issued outside of the terms of this Code of Conduct or where no offence has been committed); or
 - b) the notice ought not to have been issued to the person named as the recipient.
30. Should a Penalty Notice be withdrawn:
- a) notice of the withdrawal should be given to the recipient;
 - b) any amount already paid by the recipient should be reimbursed;
 - c) any proceedings under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 instituted against the recipient should be discontinued.

Retention of Receipts and Revenue Collection

31. The County Council will retain all revenue from the issuing of Penalty Notices in order to cover the costs of issuing and enforcing notices and the cost of prosecuting those recipients of the notices who fail to pay.
32. The County Council will produce an annual audit statement as part of its usual audit procedures in order to show that income received from Penalty Notices does not exceed enforcement costs as defined above. Any surplus acquired will be surrendered to a consolidated fund.

PENALTY NOTICE

SECTION 444A EDUCATION ACT 1996

Please read the notes overleaf.

PART 1

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

To: (Title) (Forenames)
..... (Surname)
.....

Date of birth (if known): Of:
(Address)
.....
(Postcode)

You are a parent of (name and address of pupil) (called in this notice "the pupil") who is a registered pupil at (name of school).

Between (date) and (date) the pupil failed to attend regularly at the school.

This notice gives you the opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted for the offence given above. The amount of the penalty is £60/£120 in accordance with the table overleaf. If you pay this penalty within the time limits set out below, no further action will be taken against you in connection with the offence as set out in this notice.

Payment should be made within 21 days. If paid after 21 days but within 28 days the penalty is doubled to £120. Payment should be made to an Education Welfare Officer at one of the following addresses:

(Insert address at which payment should be made)

Payment may be made by post or in person. (Offices are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Thursday and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday). Cheques should be made payable to Cambridgeshire County Council. Should you wish to make payment in person, you are required to telephone the appropriate office in order to make a mutually convenient appointment.

Late or part payments will not be accepted and no reminders will be sent. If payment is not received by (insert date 28 days from date of issue), you may be prosecuted for the offence and could be subject to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months in prison.

This notice is issued by: (name) (title)
.....

Organisation: Date:
.....

PART 2

Please complete the following and return this notice to one of the addresses overleaf.

Name: Address:

.....

..... I attach

payment in the sum of: Signed:

.....

Date:

.....

Received the sum of £..... in relation to a Penalty Notice issued
on in respect of (name of child)

Dated.....

Signed.....

Name..... (Please print)

Title.....

(A copy of this receipt should be sent to all parties subject to the Notice and a copy retained on file)

Notes

1. Contact Details

If you have any queries about this notice please contact the relevant Education Welfare Officer at one of the addresses shown in Part 1 of the Notice.

2. Amount of penalty

The amount of the penalty is as follows: When paid

Within 21 days	£60
When paid within 28 days	£120

3. Code of Conduct

This notice is issued in accordance with a Code of Conduct drawn up by the Local Authority. Any enquiries regarding this Code of Conduct should be addressed to the relevant Education Welfare Officer at one of the addresses overleaf.

4. Withdrawal

This notice may be withdrawn should it be shown that it should not have been issued to you or has not been issued to you in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Should you believe that the notice was wrongly issued you should contact the relevant Education Welfare Officer as soon as possible (no later than within 10 days of the notice having been issued), stating why you believe the notice to have been incorrectly issued. Your query will be considered and you will be contacted to notify you whether the notice is to be withdrawn. Should it be decided not to withdraw the notice and you fail to pay the sum specified you will be liable to prosecution for the offence that your child has failed to attend school regularly.

5. Payment

You should complete the notice above (**Part 2**) and send or deliver it to one of the addresses given. Please telephone the appropriate office to make an appointment should you wish to make payment in person.

6. Prosecution

Should you not pay the penalty notice and should the notice not be withdrawn you will be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school. You will receive a separate summons for this which will give you notice of the time and date of the court hearing. You will be given the opportunity to defend yourself and you are advised to seek legal representation; in some circumstances you may be entitled to legal aid.