

# Cardinal Road Infant & Nursery School - Attendance Policy

## CARDINAL ROAD INFANT and NURSERY

### SCHOOL



### ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Review: Autumn 2019, 2021**

**Next Review: Autumn 2025**

**Signed:**

**Date**



# Cardinal Road Infant & Nursery School - Attendance Policy

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# Cardinal Road Infant & Nursery School - Attendance Policy

***This School's Attendance Policy is set in consideration and consequence of the provisions of the following;***

- ***The Education Act 1996***
- ***The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013***
- ***The Education (Penalty Notice) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013***
- ***Department For Education Guidance as from time to time issued in respect of school attendance matters***

## **1. Introduction**

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs s/he may have. The Education Act of 1996 states that a parent is responsible for ensuring their child attends regularly and punctually. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.

Parents must ensure their child / children receive an education between the school term after their fifth birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16. The expectation of schools and the Local Authority is that children attend school 100% unless they are ill. The Department of Education and Skills (DfES) expect schools to have attendance rates of 94.5% (primary) and 93% (secondary).

The Court has determined that "Regular" attendance means that which is "*in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school*" (*Isle of Wight Council -v- Platt* (6<sup>th</sup> April 2017) [Supreme Court] [2017] UKSC 28 (on appeal from [2016] EWHC 1283 (Admin)).

Cardinal Road Infant & Nursery School takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

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## 2. Aims of this Policy

Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's policy concerning required attendance and with regard to the authorised and unauthorised absences of its pupils. This document details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance. The Governing Body has appointed a governor to oversee attendance matters.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting their absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders settle into their next stage of education more easily
- Good attendance promotes desirable work attitudes for future employment
- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance

Non-attendance at school is likely to leave children vulnerable to:

- Literacy and numeracy difficulties
- Underachievement at school
- Disaffection and reduced opportunities in life
- Unemployment and social exclusion
- Anti-social behaviour
- Youth crime

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## 3. Absence

This school expects its Pupils to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there are good reasons for the absence and the absence is authorised. Schools are required by the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 to distinguish in the attendance register between authorised and unauthorised absences for all children of compulsory school age.

There are two main categories of absence: authorised and unauthorised.

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification of the absence, or given approval in advance for the absence.

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence after a parent's request.

Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Keeping your child off school with a minor ailment such as a headache or cough or cold is not acceptable. Repeated absence will require us to request that you obtain evidence from your doctor's surgery, such as a stamped appointment card or a prescription. Please note that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for this information and will not be liable for the cost.

Children must be absent from school if they are having diarrhoea or vomiting, and can return to school 24 hours after their last bout of diarrhoea or vomiting if they are eating and drinking normally.

Children must be absent from school if they have a fever of 38 degrees or above.

Children can come to school if they are vomiting due to coughing, but not if they are vomiting due to a stomach bug.

Parents/guardians should always telephone the school office on 0208 890 6306, or leave a message or send an e-mail if their child is not attending school by 9.30 am.

The School Attendance Officer will telephone parents on the first morning of an absence if notification has not been received. In accordance with our Safeguarding procedures, we will contact 2 nominated contacts to ascertain the reason for absence.

Registers are checked regularly and where there is an unexplained absence, a written request will be sent for an explanation. The absence will be marked as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is not good practice to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Regular analysis of absenteeism will be carried out and parents will be contacted if their child's attendance falls below expected levels and if appropriate; an attendance target set.

Should a child's attendance not improve, this will result in referral to the School Attendance Support Service in accordance to current procedures.

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## 4. Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year without good reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absences thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

## 5. Punctuality:

The Infant school playground gates are opened at 8:40am and school officially starts at 8.50am. Registers are taken immediately; they are taken again at the start of the afternoon session.

Parents and carers are expected to bring their child to school on time. A child arriving after registration i.e. after 8.50am is disruptive for the class and embarrassing for the child. Vital information is given at the start of the school day and the child's learning may be affected if he/she is not present for the full session.

Children should only be late in exceptional circumstances.

A child who arrives after the playground gates have been closed must be brought to the school office and be registered as arriving, the reason given and the number of minutes they are late are recorded. The number of minutes late each month is monitored.

A child who arrives after the registers close at 9.20 am is marked as recorded as arriving after the register is closed. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety requirements. Any child who arrives after 9.20am is marked with a specific 'late' code which affects their attendance percentage, and is classified as unauthorised absence.

## 6. Medical Appointments

If you have a medical / dental appointment which cannot be arranged outside of school hours, we will need to see a medical card / letter before the absence can be authorised. If an emergency appointment is made, please ask the surgery to give you a note with the date and time of the appointment. Where possible your child should be in school before and after the appointment.

Please avoid making appointments for during the school day as it is disruptive to both the child concerned and others in the class.

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## 7. Term Time Leave of Absence

At Cardinal Road Infant & Nursery School, we believe term time absences should be actively discouraged. Our purpose is to ensure that your child achieves to their full potential and there is a clear link between poor attendance and underachievement.

Parents must advise of the term time leave as far in advance as possible, giving at least 2 weeks' notice. The advice must be given in writing using the "Notification of term time absence" form available from the school office. Please note, completing the form provides the school with a reason for absence, it is not a request for the leave to be authorised.

The notification must include the reason why it is felt necessary to take leave during term time (the "exceptional" circumstances).

On receipt, the Head Teacher of the school, or such person as duly authorised by the Headteacher to do so on their behalf, will consider the submitted notification and will take into account the reason as given by the parent for the leave ahead of deciding whether or not such given reasons are, in their view, "exceptional" to merit the authorising of the absence.

The parent who submitted the notification will be notified by letter from the school within seven days of the school's decision in response to the notification whether the leave will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

Term time leave taken without authorisation will be referred by the School to the School Attendance Support Service.

Examples for which term time leave will not be authorised:

- Availability or cost.
- Extended holiday at the beginning or end of the term.
- Family event or celebration abroad
- A term-time booking made in error by the parent or another person

Any absence that has not been authorised will be referred to the School Attendance Support Service and, where the criteria for doing so is met, may result in prosecution proceedings or a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued per parent per child.

There are 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which every child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. Parents should ensure that family holidays are taken during school holiday periods only.

If a child of statutory school age is absent for more than 20 school days, the school will notify Hounslow Council and remove the child's name from the school roll. A returning pupil would have to re-apply for a Hounslow school place when they return to the Borough.

Holidays of any length taken without notification will not be authorised.

### 7.1 Non statutory School Age Children

Parents are advised at both the Nursery and Reception induction meetings that term time leave is not permitted and that their child will be removed from the school roll if leave is taken. The school is not legally obliged to hold a school place open if a child of non-statutory school age is taken out of school for the purpose of term time leave. At the Headteacher's discretion, the child may be removed from the school register and their place allocated to a child on the waiting list.

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## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

### 8.1 The Role of the School Management and Staff

There is a school attendance officer and the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance

Pupils learn best when parents and staff work in partnership to maximise pupils' attendance at school, everyone is clear of expectations and procedures.

School staff have an obligation to enquire and challenge the reasons for pupils' absences and/or poor punctuality and insist on written evidence for any such absences. There is also an expectation that the staff report concerns over absence and lateness to the Headteacher. All staff are involved in maintaining the high profile of school attendance.

All classroom and administrative staff are actively involved in accurately recording, monitoring and reporting reasons for absence encouraging excellent attendance.

Schools must keep an attendance register that records a present or absent mark for each pupil. This is done at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are legal documents and can be used as evidence when legal proceedings are taken.

Schools should make parents aware of the links between attendance and attainment.

The school may send letters to parents, guardians or carers as to their child's current attendance level, unexplained absences or lateness or any other concerns.

The school is here to support parents, not penalise them. We are very approachable, please talk to us about any concerns you may have.

The school collects information daily and weekly from the registers on absences.

### 8.2 The Role of the School Attendance Support Service

The School Attendance Support Service strives to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the School Attendance Support Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

Section 444 of the Education Act states that "if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence".

The school works closely with the School Attendance Support Service. They will refer to them children whose attendance is a concern and school intervention has failed under the current referral process.

The Education Service will also be advised of any children of statutory school age that have been removed from school for the purpose of unauthorised term time leave.

Hounslow Council, through the School Attendance Support Service, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly or when unauthorised term time leave has been taken.

Further information on Hounslow Council's attendance and absence policy can be found on the following website pages:

[www.hounslow.gov.uk](http://www.hounslow.gov.uk) > schools, children and families > school and colleges > school attendance and absence

[www.hounslow.gov.uk](http://www.hounslow.gov.uk) . Schools, children and families. Schools and colleges > fixed penalty notice for poor school attendance

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## 8.3 The Role of Parents

We expect that as soon as your child starts their education at Cardinal Road Infant & Nursery School, you will abide by our attendance policy, irrespective of their age.

Parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. Furthermore, they need to see themselves as partners with schools in the education of their children. This means instilling in their children a respect for education and for those that deliver it – and ensuring that pupils complete homework on time.

Please work with the school staff and ensure you are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as this has a huge impact on a pupils learning.

Parents must:

- not condone their child's absences
- telephone the school each day that your child is unable to attend school due to illness
- avoid appointments during the school day
- not let the child decide whether he/she wants to come to school or not, it is the parents' responsibility to bring the child to school

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- talk to the child's class teacher in the first instance

## 8.4 The Role of the Governing Body:

It is the Governors' legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their school. The school's attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

## 9.0 Promoting School Attendance

We celebrate excellent attendance throughout our school, by various actions:

- weekly attendance bear for the classroom
- display board in the walkway
- termly attendance certificate and reward, both for children with 100% attendance for the term and also for improved attendance – presented at attendance assembly

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## 10. Re-integrating Pupils after Absence

Regular attendance and continuity in education are important to all pupils. Following both long and short term absence for whatever reason pupils returning to school have particular needs. In addition to the disruption for the individual absentee, returning pupils can be disruptive to other members of the class. A balance has to be struck between returning pupils and maintaining continuity for the rest.

Following longer-term absences, a planned return date can minimise problems and is desirable if possible. Staff can be prepared and support made available where practical.

It may be helpful in some cases if pupils come into school prior to the return date to establish arrangements, expectations and provide opportunity for pupil concerns to be answered.

Circumstances may prevail where the school wishes to arrange a phased return to school. Returning on a part time basis may be in the best interest of a particular pupil and increase the likelihood of a successful re-integration. Cases will be considered individually. Examples may include school phobias, long term absentees, and pupils recovering from illness or injury where an end of week return would be less tiring than a full week in the first instance.

Strategies for re-integration include:

- Procedures for the re-integration of each pupil are established and communicated to all staff whatever the reason for absence (e.g. illness, injury, home circumstances, truancy, exclusion)
- All relevant staff will be informed in advance of a pupil's return following a long term absence. This is viewed both as a courtesy to staff and pupil, and minimises the potential disruption.
- Staff need to be aware and recognise that:
  - The returning pupil may need extra help in catching up with work
  - Pupils are often nervous on their return
  - Courage may be needed by the pupil following exclusion, truancy, bullying or relationship problems
  - Teacher comments need to be sensitive to foster easy re-integration
  - A welcoming approach helps establish a positive ethos where pupils feel missed when they are absent
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## 11. Administering Medication in School

See policy "supporting pupils with medical needs in school"

School Attendance Officer details: Mrs Julie Brown – [office@cardinalroad.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:office@cardinalroad.hounslow.sch.uk)





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[www.hounslow.gov.uk](http://www.hounslow.gov.uk) > schools, children and families > schools and colleges > fixed penalty notice for poor school attendance

