



# **Carr Manor Community School**

## **Attendance Policy**

**Date adopted by the governing body: May 2026**

**Review date: May 2028**

## **Principles**

At Carr Manor Community School we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and creating a positive community where all pupils feel valued, welcomed and included. Excellent attendance is fundamental to ensuring that children and young people reach their full potential and have the best life chances and opportunities in their future lives. It is the responsibility of Leeds City Council, all schools, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership to ensure that all our children and young people receive an appropriate education suitable to their needs. As a school we strive to achieve a goal of at least 96% attendance.

We believe that strong attendance is paramount to develop the whole child. We believe that it takes character to develop strong attendance, creating habits which will help a pupil succeed in their future life. Attendance is everyone's business, all of the time. We will work with families through various means, including coaching, to ensure that all members of the school community are ambitious to secure the best attendance possible and that they find an intrinsic purpose to attend school.

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, it is the legal responsibility of the parent to ensure their children attend school. Statistics show a direct link between underachievement and absence below 95%. Regular attenders make better progress both socially and academically.

## **Expectations**

### **As a parent –**

- We expect your child to attend school every day and on time and any issues preventing attendance are discussed with the school office, Head of Year (Secondary Phase) or Mrs Somers (Primary Phase).
- We expect that, if your child is absent, you will inform the school giving a reason why by phone/text on **0113 336 8403** (Secondary) or **0113 336 8401** (Primary) by 9.00am on each morning of absence, or alternatively report absence directly to the school reception.
- If your child is absent due to a medical appointment, they must attend school before and/or after the appointment and bring medical evidence (appointment card, letter or text message) to prove their absences.
- You should inform us promptly of any changes to address or telephone numbers.

### **As a school –**

- We will contact you if there has been no contact made to school either via telephone or at the school office to report an absence. The attendance team and/or Head of Year will contact you by phone or will do a home visit to obtain a reason for the absence. This is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety. You may be asked to provide evidence for the absence.
- Monitor your child's attendance and send you letters to notify you of their attendance percentage.
- The Attendance Team may contact you to discuss your child's attendance and explore ways in which we can support you to improve their attendance

- If we believe that your child is absent due to a holiday you may be issued with a penalty notice - £60 per parent per child.
- If absence falls below 92% for any child it may alert the Attendance and Admission Lead at the 2gether Cluster which we are part of.
- If your child misses 10 sessions (5 days) in a term they may be placed on the Fast Track initiative (see below).
- Reward pupils for good attendance and those who make sustained improvements.
- Monitor absence and call or invite you to a meeting in school if your child's attendance falls below 95%.
- Please note if your child's attendance is **below 92%** you may be contacted by the attendance team or the Attendance Lead from the 2gether Cluster, even if you have informed school about your child's absence.
- Ask you to provide evidence if your child has a poor attendance record.

### **Authorised Absence**

An authorised absence is when your child has been given permission to be absent from school. It is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – at the Principal's discretion
- Religious observance – no more than two days per academic year
- Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Principal.

Authorised absence is at the Principal's discretion and you may be required to provide school with evidence of the absence.

Accepted evidence:

- Appointment card or letter
- Letter or note from GP
- Medication or prescription with correct name and dates
- Comment slip or receipt from the pharmacy
- Notification from a medical professional

Routine doctor and dental appointments should be booked at the end of the day and during school holidays where possible. We know that sometimes you cannot choose hospital appointments, so please just make sure you only take your child out of school for the appointment and return them to school when they have finished. Your child's absence may be marked as unauthorised for one of the morning or afternoon sessions if your child was expected to return to school. Evidence should be provided for all scheduled appointments.

## **Unauthorised Absence**

An unauthorised absence is when no explanation for absence has been given to school, or if the reason provided does not meet guidelines set out by the Department for Education. It is defined as:

- Holidays in term time where permission has NOT been given by the school
- Late after registers have closed
- Unexplained absence
- Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for 10 days will be automatically referred to the local authority as a child missing education.
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Staying at home to care for sick relatives
- Birthdays, weddings or anniversaries
- Transport issues e.g. car broken down

It is important to note that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time. Regular, unauthorised absences may lead to a referral to the Cluster Attendance and Admission Lead regarding your child's poor attendance record. You will be asked to attend an attendance panel meeting. Failure to improve your child's attendance and engage with the Attendance Lead will result in legal proceedings. If found guilty of failing to secure your child's regular school attendance, you could receive a fine of up to £1000 and a criminal record.

## **Continuing concerns around school attendance**

School will start to ask for medical evidence before authorising any further absences if your child's attendance falls below 96%.

Ultimately, parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council's School Attendance Service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the local authority to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education.

When necessary statutory action will be taken under Section 444 Education Act 1996 or Education Supervision Order under the Children's Act 1989 this may take the form of a penalty notice, prosecution of parents in the Magistrates Court resulting in a fine or a statutory order.

## **Exceptional circumstances**

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time. Absence in term time will only be considered if parents/carers make a request to the school on the appropriate form giving exceptional reasons why the application for absence has been requested and provide information to support their application. Please note that the definition of 'exceptional' means 'very unusual'. Therefore, a second request for absence based on 'exceptional circumstances' is unlikely to be authorised.



The Principal will decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. Parents/carers, who take their children out of school during term time without authorisation may be issued with a penalty fine.

### **Children Missing Education**

If there is no contact between school and the family and the child's whereabouts are unknown, it is possible for a child to be removed from a school roll. This will only happen in circumstances where children do not return to school for ten days after an authorised absence or are absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days.

### **Fast Track Initiative**

Fast Tracks place pupils on a structured programme with monitored periods giving the opportunity for improvement. Where unauthorised absence continues, parents will be invited to attend a formal School Attendance Panel to discuss the reasons for poor attendance and to examine any support needs. Parents may be issued with a penalty warning letter and subsequently a penalty notice for irregular school attendance if unauthorised absence persists.

**Carr Manor Community School is part of the 2gether Cluster which has a collective agreement on their approach to attendance based on local authority and DfE guidance.**

**Schools in the 2gether Cluster also have an attendance target of at least 96%.**

As a school, we classify attendance as follows:

<b>96% and above</b>	<b>Attendance is at or above our minimum expected level.</b>
<b>92 – 96%</b>	<b>Attendance is a concern and requires improvement to achieve our expected level.</b>
<b>92% and below</b>	<b>Attendance at this level is a significant concern.</b>

Attendance is presented as a percentage; the table shows days of learning missed over the year:

Attendance Percentage	Weekly	Termly	Yearly
98%	30 minutes	1 1/4 day	4 days
95%	1/4 day	3 1/2 days	10 days
90%	1/2 day	7 days	19 days
85%	3/4 day	10 days	28 days
80%	1 day	14 days	40 days

Over five years, children with an average attendance of 85% - 90% will have missed half a school year of education while children with an average attendance of 80% will have missed the equivalent of a whole school year.

**Department for Education guidelines class any child with attendance of 90% or below as persistently absent.**

#### **Lateness**

The gates at Carr Manor Community School open at 7.30am for pupils in the Secondary Phase who want to attend Breakfast Club, and close at 8.50am in the Secondary Phase on a Monday and 8.30am Tuesday – Friday, ready for Period 1. All Secondary Phase pupils who arrive after 8.50am on a Monday and 8.30am Tuesday – Friday, will be marked as late and will receive a detention for being late. Primary Phase pupils who have a place in Breakfast Club can be dropped off 7.45am every day. The gates in the Primary Phase open at 8.30am and close at 8.50am (Key Stage 2) and 9.00am (Reception and Key Stage 1). Primary Phase pupils who arrive after the gates have been closed need to be signed in at the school office by their parent/carer. Late marks can lead to poor attendance and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure children are at school on time. If your child is persistently late you may be invited to a meeting to discuss this, or you may be issued with a penalty notice.

Being late to school has a significant impact on the amount of learning time lost over a school year.

**The table gives you an indication of how much time is lost if you child is regularly late.**

Minutes late per day	Number of hours lost over a year	Number of days lost over a year
5 minutes	15 hours 50 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	31 hours 40 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	47 hours 30 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	63 hours 20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	95 hours	20.7 days



The Department of Education states that **no child is expected to be absent from school on holiday during term time**. We expect that parents will take their child on holiday during the approved school breaks. It should be noted that there are **175 days each year** when a child is on holiday from school.

In exceptional circumstances a headteacher may permit up to 10 days' authorised absence. Most authorised requests are based on a child having an excellent attendance record (**in most cases 96% or over**), but there can be a degree of flexibility dependent on the circumstances of the request.

If your child needs to leave the area or country and will miss school due to exceptional circumstances during term time, you **MUST** speak to the attendance team and/or Head of Year (Secondary Phase) or Mrs Somers/Miss Hendrickson (Primary Phase). All exceptional leave requests **MUST** be made before the first day of absence. All parents who wish to request exceptional leave **will be invited to attend a meeting** before completing the form.

Requests that **MAY** be considered:

- Bereavement of a close family member
- Participation in a sporting event at city, regional or national level
- Recognised examinations for music or dance
- Other exceptional circumstances agreed on an individual basis by the Principal

You will **NOT** be given permission for:

- Availability of cheaper holidays
- During any national assessments
- Trips away e.g. (sporting or musical events, day trips, shopping)
- Taking a long weekend away
- General family celebrations

If you take your child **without permission** the following could happen:

- You could be referred to Leeds City Council School Attendance Service and may be issued a fine on your return - **£60 per parent per child** (e.g. a family with 2 parents and 2 children would be fined a total of £240). If the fine is **not paid within 21 days** the fine will be increased to **£120 per parent per child** (e.g. the family of 4 would now have a fine of £480). Failure to pay the fine can result in legal action.
- Your child could lose their school place at Carr Manor Community School

If your child is granted exceptional leave, your child must return to school on the agreed return date. If they do not we will have no alternative but to start proceedings, registering your child as 'a child missing education'. This could put your child at risk of losing their place in school.