

Attendance Policy

Consett Infant School

Academic Year

2024/25

Attendance Policy

2024-25

Consett Infant School

Document History Log:

Author of document:	Mrs Julia Graham	Job role:	Head teacher
Date document created:	Sept 2024	Approval by Governing Body:	November 2024

Annual Review History:

Task	Date Reviewed	Reviewed by	Signatories
First document review			
2 nd Review			
3 rd Review			
4 th Review			

Revisions Log:

Revision	Date of revision	Reason for revision	Resulting version number	Signatories

Attendance Key Contacts

Please find the details of those with overall responsibility for attendance, attendance support and attendance improvement within our school below.

Name	Role	Contact details
Julia Graham	Head Teacher / Principal	j.graham@bcfed.co.uk 01207 504464
Julia Graham	Senior Attendance Champion	j.graham@bcfed.co.uk 01207 504464

If a pupil is going to be absent from school the person who should be informed is: Mrs White, Business Manager, 01207 504464, consettinfant@durhamlearning.net

If a pupil, parent or family is having difficulty with attending school and requires advice, help or support then they can contact:

Name	Role / type of help	Contact details
Mrs A Richardson	Parent Support Advisor – Mrs Richardson will provide advice and support to parents if they are experiencing difficulties with their child's attendance	a.richardson@bcfed.co.uk 01207 504464

Help & Support

Where help or support is needed with attendance the sooner school know about this, the quicker people can work together to support with this. Where needed this can involve other services to make sure that pupils and their families get the right support, at the right time from the right people.

Children Missing from Education

If pupils whereabouts are not known following enquiries schools can legally remove pupils from the admission register (the school roll) after 20 school days of unauthorised absence. It is **vital that parents keep school informed of any change of details** and regularly update them if details change. Pupils place in schools are at risk if whereabouts are not known. Children Missing from Education must be reported to the Local Authority and the matter may be treated as a safeguarding issue.

Introduction to our school attendance vision and ethos

Consett Infant School seeks to ensure that all of its pupils receive an education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential. The school will strive to provide a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn within a culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

Regular school attendance plays a vital role in children's wellbeing and their education, ensuring that their current learning needs are being met but also building their future ability to learn.

As attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils', improving attendance is everyone's business, a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, the school and partners will work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Specific roles and responsibilities have been published in the [Working Together to improve school attendance statutory](#) guidance.

We recognise the link between regular attendance and the well-being, development and achievement of our students / pupils. We expect everyone to attend every session they are able to, to benefit from the learning and pastoral opportunities and support we offer.

Communication is vital to ensure we are able to work with our parents and pupils and support attendance.

We ask that parents check the contact details, address and emergency contact information held by the school are up-to-date are communicated to school as soon as possible as it is extremely important school can contact parents in an emergency, keep parents informed of events and progress or discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity.

The school day

The school day is from 8.40am – 3.10pm (Reception), 8.45am – 3.15pm (Year 1) and 8.50am – 3.20pm (Year 2). Drop off and pick up is from the yard at the main entrance to school.

Registration is 8.40am (Reception), 8.45am (Year 1) and 8.50am (Year 2). The register will close at 9.15am. Pupils must be in school to be marked present, otherwise another appropriate code will be used.

Pupils arriving late for registration, but before the register has closed will be recorded as late (L code).

In line with government guidance the registers will close at 9.15am.

Pupils who are not present before the register closes but attend during the session will be recorded as a U code unless the reason means another code is more appropriate. The U code is an unauthorised absence.

Arriving late to school can be disruptive and unsettling to the child and the rest of their class. Parents should contact Mrs White if there are any issues which are affecting a pupils ability to attend school on time.

If your child is late for school:

All children arriving late at school will be asked the reason for their lateness and this will be recorded on the SIMS database.

If a child is late (after registers close) for school on a number of occasions

Parents will be required to attend a meeting in school with the Head Teacher to discuss any difficulties they are experiencing and agree an action plan to improve their child's punctuality.

If the school continues to have concerns about a child's punctuality

School will contact the Local Authority Attendance Improvement team to initiate enforcement action.

Term dates and planned Inset days

Details of term dates, Inset days etc can be found on the school website <https://consett-inf.durham.sch.uk/>

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Head teachers are expected to restrict leave of absence in term-time to the specific circumstances in [regulation 11 of the School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#). There is discretion to consider exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts, circumstances and background behind the request. Permission should be requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with completing the form and returning this to Mrs Graham.

Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion. If an application is not made for leave then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised regardless of circumstances.

The DfE have stated that generally they do not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

On the first day of absence

If a pupil is to be absent for any reason, parents or carers are asked to contact the School via telephone 01207 504464 or via emailing consettinfant@durhamlearning.net providing a reason for the absence.

Appointments should be made outside of school time where possible. If this is not possible, your child should miss the minimum amount of school time necessary. If they are well enough to come back to school following the appointment they should do.

Periods of extended absence

If a child's absence continues beyond 3 days then parents are requested to notify the school to update them. If a phone call is not received, the school will contact parents to verify the absence and take any relevant action in relation to assuring itself of the child's welfare.

If the school receives no reason for any absence then an unauthorised absence will be recorded. Continued absenteeism and unauthorised absences could result in more formal action.

No reason for absence provided

If a pupil is absent from school and there is no contact from parents/carers then school will contact home to find out why the pupil not in school. This will be done via a telephone call to contacts listed on the child's record. If contact is unsuccessful, this may lead to a home visit from a member of the senior leadership team.

If the school do not receive a reason for any absence it will be recorded as unauthorised. Regular absence and unauthorised absences could result in more formal action.

Where 10 or more unauthorised absences are recorded in any 10 school week period the school must consider whether a penalty notice may be appropriate and if so will refer the matter to the local authority.

Absence authorisation

The High Court has confirmed that the school's Head Teacher authorises absences. In some circumstances, the school may request that parent's provide medical evidence to support absences.

We want to support all our pupils to ensure they can access their education and will take a support first approach. This will sometimes require communications and conversations to better understand the circumstances which may lead to absence.

Promoting good attendance and punctuality

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools;
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families;
- Give parents/carers details on attendance via Class Dojo
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absences
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting class achievements each half term;
- Reward good or improving attendance;
- Awards for 100% personal attendance each academic year

Attendance data

The Business Manager reviews attendance data for all children on a weekly basis data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most. Our school uses this attendance data rigorously to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

We will use data we have such as whole school, year group, form/class and individual pupil level to analyse for patterns of absence which may require some support to improve.

We will also consider different pupil cohorts such as all pupils, those who have free school meals, those with special educational needs or disabilities, pupil premium, children who have a social worker or are looked after etc to identify where additional support may be required.

We will use the information to inform what we do to support and aid discussions between staff, pupils and families.

We will monitor the data to understand the impact of what we do.

Absence concerns

Parents may identify concerns about school attendance early if there is a change in child's attitude to school or in their willingness to attend. If this is the case, concerns should be shared with school so people can work together to ensure that school attendance does not decline. The earlier concerns are identified and shared, the quicker they may be resolved.

Persistent absence

Pupils who miss 10% or more of their sessions at school are persistently absent

Any pupils who are persistently absent will be monitored closely and if attendance doesn't improve parents will be asked to attend a meeting in school with the Headteacher to agree an action plan to improve their child's attendance.

Mrs Richardson is also available to work with parents to identify and support with barriers to attendance.

Severe absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of their sessions at school are severely absent.

Any pupils who are severely absent will be monitored closely and if attendance doesn't improve parents will be provided with additional support through a more formal, planned approach in conjunction with the local authority. This will include an Attendance Support Meeting involving the School Attendance Champion and possibly referral to external partner services and agencies.

National framework for penalty notices and other legal intervention

To improve consistency of practice across the country there is a national framework for penalty notices.

At the point where there are 10 unauthorised absence sessions recorded in any 10 school-week period, schools must consider if:

- further support is appropriate.
- support is appropriate but is not being engaged with.
- support is appropriate but is not improving attendance.
- support is not needed, such as in cases of term-time leave of absence.

If support is appropriate, this should continue.

If support is appropriate but is not improving attendance or is not being engaged with, then a referral for consideration of legal intervention should be made to the local authority. This can include, but is not limited to a Notice to Improve, an application for an Education Supervision Order, Penalty Notice or Offence investigation Interview (PACE caution).

If support is not appropriate, such as where a holiday in term-time has taken place, a referral for a penalty notice will be made. ([DCC - Penalty Notice Code of Conduct](#))

Penalty notices offer the opportunity to deal with an irregular attendance offence without the need to go to court. Penalty notices are issued at a rate of £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

There is an escalation policy which means that if a second notice is issued within a three-year period, the second notice will only be payable at the rate of £160. Further offences will not be eligible for the offer of a penalty notice and parents may be prosecuted in court. ([DCC - Penalty Notice Leaflet](#))

If penalty notices are not paid then a prosecution for the original irregular attendance offence will take place.

If convicted at court under section 444 of the Education Act for failing to secure the regular attendance of a registered pupil at school, a parent may be fined up to £1000 for each offence. If there is evidence that a parent knowingly failed to secure the attendance and there is no reasonable justification for this, they can be fined up to £2500 and/or face up to 3 months in prison, be subject to probation supervision or have a curfew imposed as maximum sentences.

Pupils with specific needs

Our policy accounts for the specific needs of pupils/pupil cohorts, is applied fairly and consistently and considers the individual needs of pupils/ families who have specific barriers to attendance. For example, if a child has a medical need which requires them to attend regular appointments, this will not trigger action from school.

This policy is supported by our policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Bullying
- Behaviour
- Inclusive learning

APPENDIX

The school and all partners will work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.



MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.



FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.



FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.



ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Expect

We all want the best for pupils and therefore aspire to have the highest attendance possible for each individual to allow them to access the education on offer to them in a culture they feel safe, part of the community and where they want to be.

Monitor

The Business Manager reviews attendance data for all children on a weekly basis data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most. Our school uses this attendance data rigorously to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listening to and understanding barriers to attendance

Mrs Graham, Mrs Richardson and Mrs White are all available to listen to any concerns which may be affecting attendance. Mrs Graham or Mrs White will communicate with parents where concerns are identified by school. Attendance is everyone's responsibility and in Consett Infants is led by the Senior Attendance Champion Mrs Graham.

Facilitate support

At Consett Infant School we intend to remove barriers and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome any difficulties they experience with school attendance outside of school.

When a child's attendance is a concern (e.g.falls below 93%) contact will be arranged between parents and our PSA to discuss and understand barriers to attendance and decide how all partners can work together to resolve them. This discussion might include an early help or whole family plan where there are wider issues affecting attendance. If a child's attendance does not improve after this support has been offered, a formal meeting with parents will be arranged with the Head Teacher as part of the school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence. This meeting will consider whether a referral to an alternative support service is required to remove the barriers to attendance and whether this support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance may be enforced where necessary through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.