



Attendance Information

for

Parents and Carers

2018

Dear Parent and Carer

We are hoping with your co-operation and support to improve attendance and punctuality, both of which are priorities for Castle Hall Academy. We all know that regular attendance is important as it allows children to achieve the best education, and with this in mind we will closely monitor attendance in the coming academic year.

Where attendance is a concern we will work closely with parents as well as liaising with our Attendance & Pupil Support Officer. We will endeavour to provide as much advice and support as we can. You may be aware that Government legislation allows local authorities recourse to legal action for poor school attendance. Hopefully, we can resolve any concerns and avoid taking this step unnecessarily.

We also recognise that some absence is unavoidable, for example due to illness and that sometimes students may be absent from the academy for long periods due to serious illness. To support your child during these difficult times we will provide work to complete at home. Following short term periods of absence, students will usually catch up with work when they return to the academy. However, regular absences will impact on their educational progress.

To avoid your child accumulating late marks please allow extra time for your journey especially in bad weather. Students should be on site at 8.30 and moving to lessons at 8.35 ready for start of lesson at 8.40.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your child's attendance then please don't hesitate to get in touch with the academy and we will be pleased to help.

Aim

Our aim at Castle Hall Academy is to provide our students with every opportunity for the best education. To enable this to happen, punctuality and good attendance are vital. We are committed to ensuring maximum attendance for all our students and any problems regarding punctuality and poor attendance will be identified and addressed as soon as possible.

It is our policy in the academy to celebrate achievement. As attendance is a critical factor in a student's entitlement to learn, we promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our students by celebrating when this is achieved and offering rewards. Good attendance and punctuality are regularly praised in the academy.

Objectives

- To improve attendance and punctuality to 96% or above throughout the academy.
- To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absence.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality are valued by the academy.
- To maintain and develop effective positive communication between home and the academy with regard to attendance and punctuality.
- To liaise effectively with the Attendance & Pupil Support Service.
- To discourage parents from taking children on holiday in term time.

Parents/Carers must:

- Only keep students away from the academy if really necessary. Please remember if they become ill we will contact you and arrange to send them home;
- Remember that it is the duty of parents to contact the academy on the first day of absence and provide a reason by 9.30am on 01924 523232 or email StudentAbsence@castlehall.com
- Send a letter with your child to the attendance office on return to the academy giving a reason for absence;
- Where possible avoid medical appointments during academy time but if it is absolutely necessary then please ensure that your child attends prior to and after the appointment. Medical appointments should be

covered by a letter/medical appointment card. Students must sign in at the Pastoral Office on arrival if they haven't been in school before the appointment so that the absence can be authorised. Should they need to leave the academy during school time then they must provide a note from yourself and sign out at Reception. On return they must sign in again at Reception;

- Inform the academy if and why your child is going to be late. Students must sign in at the Attendance Office before going to lessons so we know that they have arrived;
- Provide the academy with new contact details, when necessary.

Please be aware:

- Absence will not be authorised if parents/carers do not inform the academy and provide a valid reason for absence. If the absence continues and it is medically related then medical evidence will be requested to ensure we can develop a plan in the academy to support your child.
- Letters regarding procedures and the potential impact of absence/lateness will be sent out from the academy and the Local Authority.

The Academy will:

- Contact parents/carers via text message in the first instance if a reason has not been provided for absence. If a response is not received then this will be followed up with a letter;
- Monitor attendance on a daily basis and identify students who are a cause for concern or beginning to develop a pattern of absence at an early stage;
- Send letters out to parents/carers with regard to the absence - where a concern has been identified;
- Invite parents of students with a percentage attendance of between 90-95% into the academy to discuss the matter.
- Provide the Attendance & Pupil Support Officer with reports for attendance on a weekly basis and liaise with the Attendance & Pupil Support Officer on a daily basis;
- If there has been no improvement following two letters from the academy on absence matters, refer to the Attendance & Pupil Support Office. A letter will follow from the Attendance & Pupil Support Officer and a meeting will be arranged at the academy to develop a plan of support. This will be done at a very early stage to avoid falling into the "**persistent absentee**" category;
- If this is unsuccessful make a referral to the Attendance & Pupil Support Service.

Holidays in term time

It is less disruptive to a student's education if family holidays are planned during school holiday periods. Applications for authorised term time leave should be made in writing to the Headteacher. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and the student's prior attendance record and current educational progress will also be taken into account when making this decision.

[In 2013, the DFE issued revised Advice on School Attendance \(which can be found at HTTP://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance\)](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance) and amended the Pupil Registration Regulations 2006.

The amendments to the 2006 regulations (which came into force on 1st September 2013) were to:

- remove references to family holiday and extended leave;
- remove references to the statutory threshold of ten school days;
- make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Any holiday taken without written authorisation will be classed as unauthorised absence and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

We want to ensure that every child receives the best education and therefore good attendance at school is vital. We will continue to monitor punctuality and attendance to reflect our attendance policy. If you would like to see the attendance policy then this is available from reception and on our academy website.

At Castle Hall Academy we feel that it is very important that the academy and parents work together to help our students. We request that you help and support the academy in improving attendance and punctuality.

Thank you for your co-operation and support.

The following leaflets are available in the academy:

Supporting schools attendance (Kirklees LA)

Is your child missing out? (Department of Education)