



THE CENTRE SCHOOL  
COTTENHAM

Astrea Academy Trust  
INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE

# Attendance Policy 2022-23

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## 1. Rationale

Every child has a right to have access to the education which he/she is entitled. Parents and staff share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at The Centre School are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum. We recognise that the Centre School is a specialist provision for student's with Social Emotional and Mental Health issues (SEMH) who may have difficulties in accessing an educational provision. Some of these students may have experienced prolonged periods out of education therefore The Centre School's expectation for attendance is 90% and above.

### Responsibilities of parents/carers

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure regular and punctual attendance for their child/children.

Long or frequent absences disrupt learning. There is a direct link between good attendance and high attainment; students do their best when they attend school regularly and are on time for school and for their lessons. ***"A whole calendar year has 365 days. A school year has 190 days. This leaves 175 days free for Birthday Treats, Shopping, Family Visits, Dental Appointments and Holidays"***. This maximises the impact of the teaching and learning that students experience at The Centre School. Parents are expected to work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect a student's attendance.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to notify the school on every day of absence, by telephone, at the earliest opportunity if their child is absent for any reason.

### Responsibilities of The Centre School

The Centre School recognise the external factors which may influence student attendance and will work in partnership with parents/carers and other relevant services to deal with any issues and improve unsatisfactory levels of attendance.

The Centre School will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents/carers and will provide an effective system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements. The Centre School will encourage and value high attendance – see *appendix a*). In addition, staff are expected to model excellent attendance.

The Centre School's Attendance Policy will be communicated through parent/carer visits with The Centre School staff and is available on The Centre School Website [www.astreacentreschool.org](http://www.astreacentreschool.org)

### Student referrals

- i) Referrals to the Centre School are predominately undertaken via the SAT (Statutory Assessment Team) following a meeting involving parents/carers and the Principal to discuss the best possible school placement to fit the needs of the student.
- ii) Prior to referral, information received from the referring school about historic attendance concerns, raises awareness of issues that may impact upon attendance.
- iii) Students are referred throughout the year and an individualised approach to an induction is implemented if necessary.

## 2. Procedures

### i) Registration

Morning registration will take place at the start of period 1 between 08.50-09.10. Students who are expected to arrive at other times are required to sign in at Reception on arrival. Student attendance for afternoon sessions will be recorded on Bromcom at the end of each school day.

### ii) Absences

Absences will either be recorded as authorised or unauthorised. All absences require a supporting explanation, however, should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (O). Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as shopping, daytrips and birthdays.

### iii) Lateness

The majority of students at The Centre School are transported to school in taxis provided by the Local Authority. This, coupled with the distance students have to travel and the poor road network in Cambridgeshire, can result in students arriving late. In these circumstances where this is not the fault of the student or parents/carers, lateness will not be recorded. If however, it is brought to our attention that students are making their taxi wait in the morning, the Local Authority will be contacted in the first instance to discuss this with parents/carers. Taxi's are only required to wait for 5 minutes when collecting students in the morning. Further instances of this can result in late marks being recorded (L).

### iv) Notifying Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will be made aware (by staff) of any times when their son/daughter will be dropped off at home after an off-site activity rather than returning to the school premises or in circumstances where the student is unwell and cannot be collected.

### v) Work Experience

Students who attend approved Work Experience placements are marked as (W) on Bromcom. The Work Experience co-ordinator will ensure contact is made with work placements daily to ensure that students have attended. The Work Experience co-ordinator will keep the 'Attendance Work Exp' document up to date, which contains details of the placements such as contact names and numbers, days on which the students should attend, transport requirements and a backup of attendance data and reasons for absence. This is available for all staff to access via One Drive.

### vi) Alternative Provisions (AP)

A small number of Centre School students attend approved Alternative Provisions during the school week. Alternative Provisions are requested to inform the Attendance Office via email on a day to day basis of student attendance, including both present and absent marks and any reason(s) for such absences (should an email not be received, the Attendance Office will make contact with the AP). In circumstances where the AP hasn't had direct contact with parent/carers, The Centre School will attempt to make contact with the parents/carers directly. In instances of non-attendance, The Centre School will follow their normal attendance procedures.

### **vii) Term-Time Holidays**

The Centre School strongly urges parents/carers to avoid booking family holidays during term-time.

Any requests for permission to take a student out of school during term time are to be made to the Principal well in advance of a known period of absence. Family holidays should **not** be taken during the school academic year, except in exceptional circumstances. If the Principal does not authorise a holiday request, then the absence from school will be recorded as an **unauthorised** absence (G) Family Holiday Not Agreed.

### **viii) Appointments**

Parents/carers are asked to make all medical, dental or other appointments at times that avoid a student missing time from school (as far as is practicable).

### **ix) Illnesses**

In instances of sickness and diarrhoea the NHS recommends that students stay off school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days. Timescales for other illnesses should be on the advice of your family GP.

### **x) Looked After Children**

Welfare Call contact The Centre School on a daily basis via telephone to monitor the attendance of our students who are in Local Authority Care, on the request of Virtual Schools. Welfare call report this data back to the Local Authority in which the student(s) reside.

### **xi) Guest Students**

The Centre School provides an education provision for a small number of Guest Students who remain on the roll of other schools. On occasions when Guest Students are absent from The Centre School, we will make the initial contact with parents/carers as per the procedure for all students. The Centre School will notify the school where the student is on roll of the absence on a daily basis via email. The Centre School will send encrypted copies of school attendance certificates via email to the school at the end of each half term. The overall attendance of Guest Students remains the responsibility of the school on which they are on roll.

### **xii) Children Missing in Education**

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding.

Children Missing from school can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children. We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

If the Attendance Officer notices a pattern of absence where the parents/carers have not given a reason, the School holds the discretion to conduct a home visit to confirm the child is safe and well.

## CME process



### 3. Dealing with Absences

- i) A standard proforma text message is sent to parents/carers via Bromcom as soon as it is apparent that a student has not arrived at the expected time, requesting that the parent/carers contact the school office to advise why their son/daughter is absent from school. Should parents/carers not respond to the text message, a call will be made to attempt to ascertain the reason for absence. Should contact not be made, this may result in the absence being unauthorised and may trigger procedures around safeguarding.
- ii) The Centre School will implement in house strategies to attempt to improve student's attendance (Attendance intervention options) – see *appendix b*).
- iii) In some cases, alongside these strategies school may also be in liaison with other agencies.
- iv) Standard proforma letters will be sent out, when despite efforts by school, a student's absence rate continues to be a cause for concern. Parents/Carers and students will be invited to attend a meeting in school to implement a plan of action – see *appendices c) d) e) f) and g)*
- v) Should concerns around a student's attendance continue, further letters will be sent which could culminate in Legal Action. The School will notify the LA via SAT of the prolonged unauthorised absence.

*NOTE: If a child lives with a family friend or relative for a period of time who has day to day care of the child, each responsible adult is considered as 'Parent' under the Education Act and can equally be charged with the same offence and prosecuted.*

### 4. Attendance Data and Monitoring

Attendance data is collected at each session (morning and afternoon).

Attendance data forms the basis of half-termly, termly and annual attendance figures required for reporting.

Individual student data will be used to quickly identify patterns of absence which cause concern. Absences which give cause for concern will result in the parents/carers being contacted by the Attendance Officer or House Head/Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### 5. Evaluation and Review

The Attendance Policy will be evaluated and reviewed every year by SLT, LGC, The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Attendance Officer.

## Attendance Policy - Appendix a)

### High attendance rates

The Centre School encourages, recognises and values high attendance with the following strategies during assemblies at the end of each half term;

- Students who achieve 100% attendance each half term are awarded with £5
- Students who achieve 95% or above, are entered into a raffle (per house group) to win £5
- Students who demonstrate a significant increase in their poor attendance, are recognised publicly during assembly (where appropriate)

## Attendance Policy - Appendix b)

## The Centre School – Attendance intervention options

£5 cash award for each full week of attendance ( <b>Monday to Friday</b> ). Illness and authorised absence do not count or is at the school discretion.	Student will receive £5 on Fridays at the end of the day.
Choice of additional/alternative extended curriculum activity	An activity which is not necessarily already on offer (within reasonable costs)
One to one day out with a staff member and reasonable activity of the student's choice for an agreed percentage increase over a half term period	Attendance between: 75 - 90% increase of 10% 60 – 75% increase of 20% Below 60% increase of 30%
Reduced time table ( <b>only ever for a maximum of half term/7 consecutive weeks</b> )	<b>* Parent(s)/carers MUST be in agreement with this*</b> <i>Mornings only</i> – student will need to be collected by parents at lunchtime, taxi's cannot be changed for this unless they travel alone. Please consider only offering this for 2/3 days per week to begin.
Later taxi pick up ( <b>only to be used in extreme circumstances as this request has to go through Education Transport and may be declined due to finances</b> ). This should be for a short term agreed period.	9.25 start at school ready for the beginning of Period 2.
Work Experience	Opportunity for an approved work placement one or two days per week
Bespoke arrangement with Head of House	To be discussed with Attendance Officer and DSL to ensure that it meets criteria and policy

[Attendance Policy – Appendix c\) Letter 1](#)

[Attendance Policy – Appendix d\) Letter 2](#)

[Attendance Policy – Appendix e\) Letter 3](#)

[Attendance Policy – Appendix f\) Letter 4](#)

[Attendance Policy – Appendix g\) Sixth Form Letter 1](#)