

Canaan Lane Primary School

# **Attendance Policy & Procedures**



Updated August 2024



## The Canaan Lane Way

We aspire to be a happy, fair and safe place where everyone feels that they belong and that they matter.  
A place where we can be ourselves; find our passions; and help others to do so to.

## OVERVIEW

At Canaan Lane Primary, we understand that school absence affects attainment, achievement, wellbeing and wider outcomes.

We follow the guidance set out in the Edinburgh Learns Maximising Attendance Policy ([Edinburgh Learns Maximising Attendance Policy](#))

## KEY PRINCIPLES

The following key principles promote our effective whole school approaches to ensuring good attendance. At Canaan Lane, we aim to:

- ✓ promote positive attendance patterns for all learners
- ✓ know our learners and their families well and work in partnership with all parent/carers to remove any barriers to attendance for our learners
- ✓ analyse attendance data regularly to identify concerns and inform future policy and practice
- ✓ use a variety of individualised supports to ensure learners maximise their attendance (supports are regularly reviewed and their impact closely monitored as part of the CPM process)
- ✓ work with our learning community to establish a shared approach to promoting positive attendance
- ✓ continue to promote our school and learning community attendance visual and raise awareness of the impact on learning, engagement, and relationships
- ✓ continue to reinforce the council maximising attendance policy, promoting that wherever possible, holidays should not be taken within term time and all school absences should be kept to a minimum
- ✓ work closely with and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and multi-agency teams within the GIRFEC procedure

## OUR POLICY IN CONTEXT

This policy does not stand alone and is written in conjunction with the following key guidance and policy documents from both a local and national perspective:

- *Edinburgh Learns: Maximising School Attendance* – City of Edinburgh Council (2024)
- *Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1: Promoting and Managing School Attendance* – The Scottish Government (2019)
- *Guidance on Attendance Policies and Procedures* – The Scottish Government (2024)
- *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* – The Scottish Government (2013)
- *The Education (Scotland) Act* – The Scottish Government (2016)
- *Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures* – Edinburgh & The Lothians (2023)
- *The Children and Young Person (Scotland) Act* – The Scottish Government (2014)

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

At Canaan Lane Primary School, we know that every day counts in a child's education. We all strive to support our children to, where possible, attend our school on time, every day. All adults in our school have a role to play in promoting, managing and supporting school attendance. Here is how we all have a role to play:

OUR ROLES	OUR RESPONSIBILITIES
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reinforce importance of coming to school and being on time.</li> <li>✓ Notice if pupils are absent, missing activities or late.</li> <li>✓ Praise good attendance, particularly those who we know do not always attend or may often be late in.</li> <li>✓ Highlight any attendance concerns with SLT.</li> </ul>
Office Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Warmly welcome our pupils when arriving late, sympathetically asking for a reason, if appropriate to see if any support is needed.</li> <li>✓ Inform SLT of any concerns.</li> <li>✓ Communicate with families to confirm the whereabouts of pupils as part of completion of the daily registration processes.</li> <li>✓ Update SEEMIS with TBC / Medical / Absence information</li> <li>✓ Follow up phone calls or emails to identified parents and update registers as required. This will be done by 9.30am each school day.</li> <li>✓ Inform class-based staff of reasons for absence.</li> </ul>
Class Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Accurately record pupil absence and late-coming on registers by 09.15 each morning; and after lunch within first 5 minutes of returning into classroom</li> <li>✓ Have learner voice centre of learning, and ensure pupils have the opportunity to talk privately if they wish to.</li> <li>✓ Discuss attendance with parents and carers, where appropriate, in relation to progress in learning.</li> <li>✓ Inform SLT of any patterns of attendance or late-coming.</li> </ul>
Pupil Support Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure learner voice is at the heart of activities, particularly to support those with poorer attendance.</li> <li>✓ Celebrate the successes and the ability to overcome challenges in activities.</li> <li>✓ Offer regular check ins/meet and greet in the morning to promote positive attendance.</li> <li>✓ Inform class teachers and SLT of regular late-comers.</li> </ul>

<b>Attendance Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Offer individualised support for pupils and families where required.</li> <li>✓ Be aware of external factors that could be impacting attendance.</li> <li>✓ Work closely with SLT and engage as part of any supports that need to be put in place.</li> <li>✓ Gather learner views</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Leadership Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sharing the importance of good attendance regularly with parents in school updates, school website and Parent Council meetings</li> <li>✓ HT and Admin team to track attendance weekly and meet monthly to run attendance report (discuss any learners 90% and below) and action supports that may be required.</li> <li>✓ Email class teachers regarding any learners who have 90% or less, attendance. Class teachers to provide update/reasons if possible.</li> <li>✓ Send letter to families below 90% attendance (log on Pastoral notes)</li> <li>✓ Constructively inform, communicate and discuss with families about the reasons for absence or late coming and how the school and partner agencies may be able to help them.</li> <li>✓ Gather learner views.</li> <li>✓ If attendance drops below 85%, arrange meeting with families (Assessment of Need Meeting/Child Planning Meeting to be held). Referral to EWS to be actioned (as per attendance procedure flowchart). Further discussion of recommended supports to be implemented</li> </ul>

## WHAT IS EXPECTED OF OUR PARENTS AND CARERS?

- ✓ To be aware of the curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regards to how sporadic attendance can affect a child's progress
- ✓ To keep their child's absences to a minimum
- ✓ To contact the school office by phone on the first morning of any school absence
- ✓ To offer a detailed reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence, or on the first day of absence (via telephone call)
- ✓ To work closely with the school to resolve any issues that may impede a child's attendance
- ✓ To ensure that their child arrives on time
- ✓ To offer a reason for any lateness and appropriate and proportionate support accepted when this is an issue
- ✓ To keep the school updated should contact numbers or address details change

## WHAT IS EXPECTED OF US BY OUR LOCAL AUTHORITY:

- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- To continue to develop procedures that enable our school to identify, follow up and record authorised and unauthorised absence, patterns of absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- To consistently record absence within the guidance of The Education (Scotland Act (2016) and City of Edinburgh Council procedures.
- To continue to use a range of strategies to follow up intermittent and long-term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- To encourage supportive and constructive communication between home and school.
- To follow CRP flowchart
- To support children in why they are experiencing difficulty in attending school, offer tailored and individualised support to help improve attendance.
- To promote an ethos of inclusion and equality where all behaviour is understood as a form of communication, through the school's Relationships, Learning and Behaviour Policy

## LATENESS

**School starts at 08.45 for learners in Primary 3 – 7.**

**School starts at 09.00am for pupils in Primary 1 and 2.**

We offer a flexible start to the day with entrance doors open from 08:35-08:45 (P3-7) and 08:50-09:00 (P1-2). Doors will be closed after this time so any child arriving after the doors have closed will need to enter via the main reception door

Class teachers record attendance on SEEMIS by 09:05 and the school register closes at 09:15. Lateness is classed as any child arriving through the main reception door after the register has been taken. They will receive an annotation of them being late on SEEMIS. Follow up attendance calls will be completed by the school office by 9.30am each school day.

Lateness is monitored on a monthly basis and letters are sent home to the parents and carers informing them of the lost lesson time and disruption caused to the child and the class as a whole. If the lateness is persistent, then the school will seek to meet or speak with parents and carers to discuss our concerns. Cases of persistent lateness may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

## ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE (EWS)

The Education Welfare Service aim to improve the attendance of all our children. There are a range of different strategies that can be used by the Education Welfare Service to support families and raise awareness of the importance of school attendance. These range from written notifications to home visits or referrals to external support agencies.

## PERSISTENT LATENESS

A child who has an attendance figure of 85% or below is classed as a persistent absentee. An Assessment of Need or Child Planning meeting will be arranged, and the learner will be referred to the EWS. Parent/carers are informed of the referral being made.

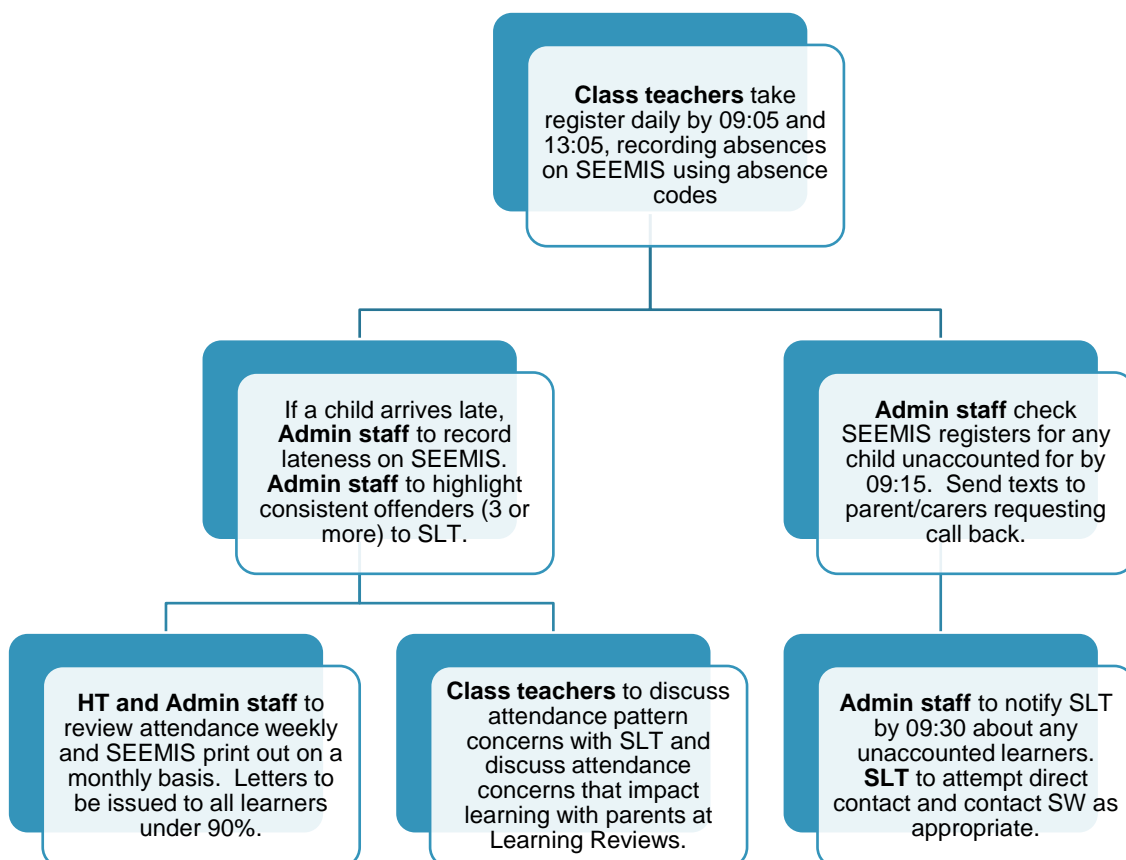
A child who has an attendance percentage falling between 90% and 95% will be closely monitored and supported to prevent them falling into the persistent absentee category. Reminder letters to families can be considered if attendance starts to fall (see letter template appendix). They may be referred to the EWS and the school may also request medical evidence for further absences as this can be classed as a Child Protection issue.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The school manages daily absences and SEEMIS absence recording.
- The school screens and monitors persistent attendance and late-coming using an EXCEL tracker with data extracted from SEEMIS.
- The school's Head Teacher meets with the Admin Team on a weekly basis and those children identified as below 90% are discussed. Agreements on monitoring, supports and interventions are put in place, where required (see flow chart).
- The Local Authority publishes monthly attendance overviews for all its schools. This provides a guide to where a school is on a citywide basis and documents any improvements they have made.
- From SEEMIS, the school draws a monthly report, which is compiled to focus on Attendance below 90%. The HT can check individual attendance summaries. Template letters are then sent out to the families of those children who have been identified and a record of these and any parental responses are kept. These template letters are noted in Appendices 3,4 and 5 of this policy below.

As a school, we realise that there are other patterns and modes of school attendance that may need to be put in place or requested by families that are acceptable by law. These can be discussed between school and families using the GIRFEC structures and suitable arrangements made. The school or external agencies can advise families on their rights in these areas and support them accordingly. The school can also seek advice from our own Local Authority and external agencies, where required.

# CANAAN LANE ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCEDURE



PARENTS & CARERS	ADMIN STAFF	CLASS TEACHERS	SENIOR LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>report daily absence via phone (school absence line: 0131 529 2191)</li> <li>provide a clear reason for absence along with expected date of return</li> <li>make any requests for planned absence in term time by email to HT with (ideally with a notice period)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collate reported absences via absence line into absence book</li> <li>identify any patterns such as infectious disease or outbreak and raise with SLT.</li> <li>update codes for absence on SEEMIS register</li> <li>ensure any late arrivals are recorded on SEEMIS</li> <li>identify any unaccounted learners - make contact by text / phone</li> <li>update SLT by 9.30am on any still unaccounted learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take an accurate register as learners arrive in class first thing and again after lunch</li> <li>update SEEMIS by 9:05am.</li> <li>look for any patterns of concern or low attendance. Discuss these with SLT promptly.</li> <li>Engage with families to support good attendance.</li> <li>note SLT monthly attendance matters email: discuss concerns.</li> <li>make every effort to help learners with lower attendance catch up and re-engage. use any available resources eg PSA support, or advice from Sfl</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>share message of importance of strong attendance</li> <li>track attendance weekly and run monthly school absence report.</li> <li>monitor attendance below 90%. Issue letters to parent/carers</li> <li>identify any learners below 85% for immediate action</li> <li>email CTs with monthly 'attendance matters' about any learners 90% or less</li> <li>log attendance actions, absence requests and any meetings re absence on pastoral notes</li> <li>discuss attendance with families below 85%. AON or CPM held. Referral to EWS</li> </ul>



## EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE – CENTRAL REFERRAL SYSTEM

