

Attendance Policy

APPROVAL and REVIEW

Review date: **September 2020**

Approval needed by: **CTA Governing Body**

Adopted: **October 2020**

Next Review date: **September 2021**

Attendance Policy

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The school employ an Independent Education Welfare Specialist Service (Attend EDC) as their Education Welfare Officers, to ensure that we maintain good standards of pupil attendance.

Legislation and Guidance:

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

School Procedures:

ATTENDANCE REGISTER:

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will mark whether each student is:

- Present
- Attending an off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

ABSENCE:

Parents must notify the school as soon as possible of any unplanned absence, such as illness, via our text message system or MyEd App.

We ask parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible however if this is not possible then pupils should be out of school for the minimum amount of time and parents should notify the school in advance of this absence.

If a student fails to attend school then the Attendance Officer will send a text or message through MyEd App to request a reason for the absence. The school will follow up absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken as necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. (see appendix 1 for attendance codes).

It is essential that parents whose children are experiencing attendance difficulties should contact school at an early stage and work together with school in resolving these problems.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ATTENDANCE:

The Head of School may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head of School's discretion. Family holidays should not be taken during term time.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – that cannot be reasonably fitted in outside of school hours
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

ATTENDANCE MONITORING:

Attendance is monitored on a weekly basis. Students whose attendance falls below 95% will be monitored by a variety of means: -

- Letters sent home
- Phone calls with parents
- Meetings with students, parents, Educational Welfare (VIP Education), school or a variety of these to offer support to students and parents

LEGAL SANCTIONS:

If attendance continues to fall then school will consider legal sanctions.

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. This includes holidays – which can only be authorised by the Head of School in 'exceptional circumstances'.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head of School, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as **holidays** taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY:

All students should arrive on the school site by 8.25am to enable them to be at their form rooms for the start of the day at 8.30am.

The school monitors late arrival of students. Any student who arrives late for school will receive a break detention. Persistent lateness may result in after school detentions of which parents will be notified.

Students arriving late because the school bus arrives late will be marked present but they will need to sign in with the Attendance Officer indicating which bus they were on.

Morning registration closes at 8.50am and students arriving after this will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable reason verified by parent/carer.

When a student does arrive late it is essential that they sign in with the Attendance Officer stating the time of arrival and the reason for lateness.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students:

Students should attend school regularly and punctually. They should attend every day, wearing the correct school uniform and with all the equipment needed for the day.

Parent(s)/Carer(s):

Parent(s)/Carer(s) should ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and ready to learn - regular attendance is a legal requirement. Parent(s)/Carer(s) should notify the school for each day of absence by 8.30am via the text message or MyEd App system. Parent(s)/Carer(s) should provide the school with up to date contact details and telephone numbers for every adult with parental responsibility for a student. Parent(s)/Carer(s) should promote the value of good attendance, not only to take full advantage of the opportunities offered at school but also in preparation for working life to follow.

Class Teachers/Form Teachers:

Class and form teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes on SIMS.

Attendance Officer:

The Attendance Officer officer will –

- Make the first day absence calls
- Monitor attendance data at the school and at the individual pupil's level
- Meet with parents, VIP Education to discuss attendance issues
- Work with the education welfare officers (from VIP Education) to tackle persistent absence

The Assistant Headteacher (Attendance and Behaviour):

The Assistant Headteacher will -

- Monitors attendance data at the school
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head of School
- Work with the education welfare officers (from VIP Education and attendance office) to tackle persistent absence
- Advise the Head of School when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The Head of School:

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school. The Head of School also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Special Circumstances relating to COVID-19 (September 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020 pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

New for 2020 to 2021 – not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure schools record this accurately and consistently, we have made changes to the regulations² governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)³
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day