

# SAWLEY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL



## Attendance Policy & Procedures

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VERSION CONTROL			
Version	Date	Author/Reviewer	Substantive changes since the previous version
V1	July 24	JH/DD	Template policy for ONE Academy Trust schools Introduction of statutory guidance ( <a href="#">working together to improve school attendance</a> ) effective from 19 August 2024
V2	Sept 24	JH	Updated to include additional requirements not incorporated in v1. Added: Para 7.1 Para 7.3
V3	Sept 24	MT	Title of section 8 updated to be in line with KCSIE 24 heading- <b>Unexplained Absence – Children who are absent from education, Safeguarding &amp; Children Missing Education</b>
V3.1	Oct 24	DD	Typo amended in Appendix 3. Penalty Notices applicable after 5 days absence (corrected from 3 days)

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## Forms & Associated Documents

Model letters & forms for staff (available separately)

### 1. Introduction

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At Sawley Infant and Nursery School we believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. Throughout our schools we celebrate achievement and recognise that attendance is a critical factor for a productive and successful school career. We therefore do all that we can to actively promote, encourage and ensure maximum attendance for all our pupils.

We are committed to meeting our 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.

We give a high priority to conveying to parents/carers and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play in their children's attendance and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be used effectively whenever there is concern about attendance. If any problems do affect a pupil's attendance we will work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils to investigate and resolve these quickly and efficiently in order to enable the pupil to return to full attendance as soon as possible.

This policy links to the following school policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Home/School Agreement

## 2. Aims

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The aims of this policy and our attendance procedures are:

- To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
- To promote a positive attitude to attendance and punctuality amongst pupils and their families, ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued at school.
- To raise awareness of the importance of good attendance through assemblies and promotions.
- To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply efficient systems to minimise its occurrence.
- To celebrate improved/good attendance in whole school awards and class rewards.
- To ensure a consistent approach to attendance is adopted throughout the school, and that the attendance policy is regularly evaluated, developed and maintained.
- To ensure that all staff are able to fulfil their responsibilities as identified in the attendance policy.
- To be proactive in communicating with parents regarding attendance and punctuality issues/taking action where necessary.
- To comply with government legislation and regulations.

In securing a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality amongst children and their families, the school will be enabled to provide an appropriate and uninterrupted education for all pupils, so that the highest standards of attainment can be reached.

## 3. Compliance with legislation

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**Parents/carers** have a duty to ensure that their children receive an education.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

The Education Acts 1996 and 2005, The Education and Skills Act 2008 and The Education and Inspection Act 2006 (information from Department of Education, Schools Attendance, August 2013) places the responsibility for enforcing school attendance on the Local Authority (LA).

If a compulsory school age child (age 5) is registered at any school within ONE Academy Trust, parents/carers have the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.

If a child is under age 5 and attends the foundation stage, it is the parents/carers' responsibility that they attend regularly.

Legal action, usually exercised through Targeted Support (Section 444(1) and section 437 of the Education Act 1996) (amendment – The Education (penalty notices) (England) Regulations 2007) has the following powers including:

- penalty notices for irregular attendance
- school attendance orders
- prosecution for irregular attendance
- education supervision orders

For foundation stage children, action will be taken to withdraw the place.

This policy reflects legislation at the time when it was last reviewed. Any changes in legislation will take precedence over anything printed in the policy.

## **4. Roles & responsibilities**

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### **4.1 The government expects schools and local authorities to:**

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent lateness;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Support parents in performing their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- Encourage all members of the school community to be punctual.
- Provide at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year to educate their pupils.

### **4.2 Sawley Infant and Nursery School expects pupils to:**

- Attend school regularly.
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.

#### **4.3 Sawley Infant and Nursery School expects parents and carers to:**

- Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Ensure they contact school by 8.45am on the first day of absence whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Ensure their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day.
- Contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.

#### **4.4 Sawley Infant and Nursery School will ensure:**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend without providing good reason.
- Immediate action is taken on any problem notified to us.
- All staff members contribute to improving and maintaining attendance and to take ownership of attendance as a whole school responsibility in a positive manner.
- Regular monitoring of attendance by the Leadership Team.
- A referral of specific issues to supporting agencies where appropriate.
- School assemblies are used to reinforce the value of education and the need for regular school attendance and punctuality.
- Every appropriate opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance, including e.g. newsletters and mid-year/end-of-year reports.

#### **4.5 The governing board**

Responsibility for the following oversight is held by the board of trustees. Responsibility is delegated to the local governing body who are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **4.6 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### **4.7 The designated senior leader (if appointed)/headteacher responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention re-integration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Rebecca Morley and can be contacted via telephone on 0115 9732652 or email [rmorley@sawley-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:rmorley@sawley-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk).

#### **4.8 The attendance officer (if appointed) or headteacher**

The school attendance officer/headteacher as appropriate:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Agrees with the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

#### **4.9 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

#### **4.10 School admin/office staff**

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

#### **4.11 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time from 08.45am - 03.15pm.
- Call the school or report via the school/parent communication system (not ClassDojo) their child's absence before 08.45am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

## 4.12 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every school day and arrive on time

## 5. Recording attendance

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### 5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Class teachers complete electronic registers which communicate directly with the school's information management system.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is **authorised** or **unauthorised**
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an **approved educational activity** (attendance out of school)
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The registration codes are set out in the DfE [School Attendance Guidance](#) (see Appendix 1).

Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Pupils must arrive at school by 08.45am on each school day.

Doors will open at 08.40am on each school day, with the day officially starting when registers are taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm.

**From 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 (the 24/25 academic year), schools must share daily pupil attendance data with the Department for Education.**

### Lateness and punctuality

Pupils who arrive after the registration period, but **prior to the register** being closed at 9.05am, are recorded as late (Code L) by the school's admin team.

Pupils who arrive **after the register** is closed at 09.05am, are recorded as late (Code U) by the school's admin team. Lateness under this code is recorded as unauthorised absence.

Pupils who arrive late must report to the school office where their lateness and time of arrival is recorded using the electronic entry system.



Parents/carers of pupils who are persistently late will be contacted and a meeting arranged to identify the reasons for lateness and offer any available support. Parents may be asked to complete a voluntary Parenting Contract which places the family on daily monitoring.

Where no improvement in lateness is observed, the parents/carers may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES shall any child be reprimanded for lateness by school staff.**

Attendance and punctuality remains the responsibility of the parent/carer and NOT the child.

## **5.2 Amendments to the attendance register**

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years.

## **6. Term-time absence**

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### **6.1 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence prior to registration or as soon as practically possible, by means of a written note, verbal message delivered at the school reception, or a phone call.

Where there is a concern over a child's absence, parents/carers are contacted for an explanation. It's important for parents/carers to realise that not all reasons for absence may be regarded as valid and consequently may not be authorised.

The school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence of absence due to illness or medical reasons. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

A temporary code of 'N' is entered where no explanation is given. If after 3 school days, there is still no explanation given, the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

### **6.2 Planned absence**

Routine dentist or doctor appointments should be made, as far as possible, outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

If a teacher is concerned that a pupil's absence may not be due to the reason given they should then inform the headteacher.

Where parents wish to collect their child/children before 2.30pm – a Leave of Absence form must be completed in advance. Collection before 2.30pm is recorded as an absence. Headteachers will consider this absence request according to the guidance above.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

### 6.3 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
  - Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
  - Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

### 6.4 Approval for exceptional leave of absence during term-time

Sawley Infant and Nursery School considers every request for Exceptional Leave of Absence.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Any leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

The application must be made in advance and the headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where an exceptional leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the number of days that will be authorised.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for Leave of Absence should do so using a **Leave of Absence Form**. This should be submitted to the school before making any formal arrangements for absence.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

The DfE guidance states that "leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours

### 6.5 Authorised absence

**Authorised absence** means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Examples of **authorised** leave of absence include:

- Medical/dental appointments
- Approved PE/sporting activity
- Days of religious observance in the religious body to which the parents belong
- Absence for theatrical/other performances following prior discussion with the Headteacher
- Illness
- School educational visits e.g. residentials
- Education off site

- Musical exams
- Special Family Circumstances i.e. bereavement or sickness of another close family member.
- In line with Government amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Leave of Absence for family holidays is approved due to **exceptional circumstances** only.

To reduce unauthorised and persistent absence, we contact parents/carers promptly by letter to identify an issue. This is followed up with informal and formal meetings as required to address persistent absence. Our procedures are set out in Appendices 2, 3 and 4.

### **Be mindful of mental health**

Schools should be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods.

But it is important to note that these pupils are still **expected to attend school regularly**. Doing so may serve to help with the underlying issue”.

### **6.6 Unauthorised absence**

**Unauthorised absence** is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or that the absence could not have been arranged for the school holidays.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider ‘exceptional’ and for which no ‘leave of absence’ has been granted. This includes:

### **6.7 Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. to go shopping, birthdays, day trips**

- Absences which are not properly explained
- Family holidays during term-time for which no leave of absence has been granted.

## **7. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

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### **7.1 Reducing unauthorised and persistent absence**

- To reduce unauthorised and persistent absence, we contact parents/carers promptly by letter to identify an issue. This is followed up with informal and formal meetings as required to address persistent absence. Our procedures are set out in Appendices 2, 3 and 4.

### **7.2 Inform Local Authorities of long-term sick leave**

- Schools are required to give local authorities the name and address of sick pupils who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days.
- Schools will also be “expected to inform a pupil’s social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school”.

### **7.3 Legal Sanctions & Penalty notices**

- Parents can be fined for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
- Absence fines charged to parents are charged at £80, or £160 if not paid within 21 days. Schools decide whether to issue a fine, but the Local Authority will administer the fine.

- From the start of the 24/25 Autumn Term, only two fines can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period. Any second notice will automatically be charged at £160.
- New “notices to improve” will also be the “final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued”.
- Unauthorised Leave of Absence will be reported to the penalty notice team at the Local Authority.
- If a family persistently takes unauthorised Leave of Absence, this may also be reported to the penalty notice team.
- A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days (about 4 weeks).
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
- Once 3 years have elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases, it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour.
- For the escalation process, previous penalty notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward and the parent pleaded or was found guilty) but not those which were withdrawn.

Guidance for staff will be found on the appropriate Local Authority’s schools’ portal.

#### **7.4 National Thresholds**

From the start of the 24/25 Autumn Term, schools will have to consider a fine if a pupil misses 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

The threshold can be met with “any combination of unauthorised absence”. For example, four sessions in term time plus six instances of arriving late.

The period of 10 weeks can also span “different terms or school years”. Schools retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met”. This could include where parents “are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events”.

## **8. Unexplained Absence – Children who are absent from education, Safeguarding & Children Missing Education**

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Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. All staff are aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), in conjunction with the attendance team, will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. At least two different contact numbers will be held on file for a child which can be accessed and used by the school in case of an absence/emergency. Should a child be linked to outside agencies and have a Child Protection Plan the Social Worker will be informed immediately should unauthorised absence occur.

If a child is absent from school and we have had no contact with them after efforts have been made to determine their whereabouts and we are unable to locate them and we believe that the family may have moved away leaving no contact details to find them, we will alert the Derbyshire CME team immediately.

All absences that are not accounted for will be actioned immediately by either the headteacher or admin team following the procedures below:

- During Days 1-3 of any pupil absence which is not accounted for (no contact between home-school/no reason provided for absence), the following procedure is followed:
  - All absences are investigated by our Attendance Support Worker/Officer.
  - If no reason is forthcoming from parents/carers regarding an absence, then the parents receive a text message asking for a reason for absence.
  - If there is no response to this text, parents are phoned.
  - If there is no response to the phone call, a voicemail message is left where possible and a Class Dojo message is sent.
  - We contact emergency contacts if we are unable to contact parents.
  - This process is repeated for each day of the absence if no response is given to ascertain why a child is absent.
  - Class teachers also follow up any unexplained absences when a child returns to school.
- If we are unable to establish a reason for absence and the absence procedures outlined above have taken place, on the third day of absence, members of the school senior leadership team and/or the Family Liaison Officer will visit the address of the pupil to check on the pupil's welfare. In some cases, this may take place at any stage of the absence, and this will be determined by individual risk assessments being made.
- Consideration will be given to inform the Local Authority if there are any concerns about attendance.

- Where a pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of more than 3 school days, the school follows the Derbyshire Council's attendance procedures.

The school uses contextual safeguarding information to assess the risk level around any unexplained absence and reserves the right to carry out safe and well checks and home visits as and when appropriate at any point within a period of absence, to locate and establish the whereabouts of a child and assess their safety and wellbeing.

Staff will use their professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the child's whereabouts before notifying the police. Parents/carers will always be informed before contact with the police is made, unless a child is at immediate risk of harm and a police response is needed. This will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

At all times, school staff will liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Derbyshire Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective education team
- does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the children missing officer (CMO) as they have not been registered at a new school.

Where the pupil has been located but not returned to class, a "joint decision" is needed between schools and LAs, and they can only be removed from a register if there are "no reasonable grounds" to believe the child will return, even with support or enforcement.

Where reasonably possible, all schools and colleges must hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil or student. This will enable us to contact a 'responsible adult' should a child be missing from education or a welfare or safeguarding issue or concern be identified.

All actions will comply with the most recent statutory guidance published by the DfE:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/550416/Children\\_Missing\\_Education\\_-\\_statutory\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550416/Children_Missing_Education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf)

## **9. Strategies for promoting attendance**

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We want to reward our children for good attendance and punctuality so that they understand the importance of both taking full advantage of the education on offer to them.

Each of our schools uses a range of strategies to encourage and reward good attendance and punctuality. For example:

- Children with 100% attendance are presented with a certificate at the end of the school year.
- Class points are awarded for attendance above 96%, 100% and most improved class each week. Classes are rewarded with an additional playtime when they collect 10 points.

Please see individual school websites or contact the school for more information.

## **10. Attendance monitoring**

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Attendance will be monitored at least termly. Pupils who are persistently absent will be monitored more frequently.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. The pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school each day their child is ill.

If a pupil's absence continues, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

Our absence monitoring procedure is set out in Appendix 3. Our monitoring procedure for persistent absenteeism is set out in Appendix 4.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

Our school collects and stores attendance data on a database. This is used to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as needing intervention and support.

All data is collected, used and stored in accordance with data protection legislation.

## **11. Communicating with parents**

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The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels.

Prior to children starting school, parents/carers receive an information pack, part of which emphasises the importance of good attendance and punctuality. This is also emphasised at the meeting to which all parents/carers are invited prior to their children joining the school.

Our attendance and punctuality statistics are monitored by the local governing body at our school.

Individual attendance figures for children are sent to parents/carers at least once a year e.g. in the end-of-year report.

Our Home/School Agreements emphasise the need for regular attendance and punctuality.

Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern is important so that any problems can be sorted out at an early stage in order that good attendance or punctuality is not compromised.

## **12. Elective Home Education**

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Parents are responsible for ensuring their child is educated. Most children attend school for their education, but parents have the right to educate their child at home. This is known as Elective Home Education (EHE).

A parent/carer must send a letter to the headteacher, informing the school of their wish to educate their child at home. The school will inform the Local Authority who will organise a meeting with the parent/carer, the local authority, and the school.

If a parent/carer wishes to educate their child at home, the local authority will want to discuss the learning which the child will undertake at home. This process can take some time and so school asks that the child remains in school during this process to ensure that they continue with their education until they are removed from the roll.

If the child does not attend school during this process, school reserves the right to undertake safeguarding checks.

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. A pupil will be removed from the admission register only in agreement with the local authority.

For further information from the local authority on Elective Home Education, please visit: [Derbyshire Elective Home Education Guidance](#).

For national guidance, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>

### **13. Monitoring arrangements**

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This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and when guidance from the local authority or the DfE is updated. The policy will be approved by the Headteacher, a delegated committee or individual.



## 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
K	Educational activity	Pupil is attending off site activity approved by the local authority
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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Absence for a regulated performance
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil is on a part-time timetable
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
Q	Access	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y1 Y2 Y3 Y4 Y5 Y6 Y7</b>	Unexpected absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence due to transport normally provided not being available</li> <li>• Widespread disruption to travel</li> <li>• Part of the school is closed</li> <li>• Unexpected whole school closure</li> <li>• Pupils in the criminal justice system</li> <li>• Absence due to public health guidance</li> <li>• Any other unavoidable cause</li> </ul>
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Absence from school procedure

Absence	Call received from parent/carer	Action	Letter / Guidance
1 <sup>st</sup> Day Absence	✓	Absence recorded appropriately	Absence Codes
	✗	am: Text message requesting reason for absence pm: If no response, telephone call to family School may decide a home visit is appropriate.	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Day Absence	✓	Absence recorded appropriately	
	✗	Call requesting reason for absence. Call emergency contacts. Inform SLT. <i>Consider</i> a home visit.	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Day Absence	✓	Absence recorded appropriately - phone call to discuss predicted length of absence.	
	✗		
The Senior Leadership Team should be informed of any leave of absence <u>extending beyond 3 days</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>there may need to be a request for medical evidence in order to authorise the absence</li><li>the reason given may not be suitable for authorisation</li></ul>			
4 <sup>th</sup> Day of Absence	✗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Call requesting reason for absence.</li><li>Call emergency contacts.</li><li>Inform Senior Leadership Team.</li><li>Complete home visit.</li></ul>	
5 <sup>th</sup> Day of Absence	✗	Refer to Senior Leadership Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Admin to phone parent/carer to discuss predicted length of absence.</li><li>If no contact can be made with the parent/carer – this now meets <b>Starting Point</b> referral criteria.</li></ul>	

**If at any point in the monitoring procedures, the admin team should be concerned about a child's welfare/absence, this should be raised with the Senior Leadership Team.**

## Persistent Absence

Where absence has become frequent and falls below 90%, the child becomes a 'Persistent Absentee' (PA) and will be monitored more frequently and Attendance Procedures will be followed.

Absence %	October Half-Term – Actions	February Half-Term - Actions	May Half-Term – Actions
<b>100%</b>	School rewards criteria	School rewards criteria	School rewards criteria
<b>96% - 99%</b>	No action	No action	No action
<b>90% - 95%</b>	Office to monitor pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism fortnightly.	Amber Warning	Attendance recorded on Annual Report
<b>&lt; 90%</b>	Red Warning Letter - new concerns. Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.  Informal / Formal Attendance Panel – previous persistent absentees. Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.	Red Warning Letter - new concerns. Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.  Informal / Formal Attendance Panel – Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.	Red Warning Letter - new concerns. Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.  Informal / Formal Attendance Panel – Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.

**Absence monitoring** (see Appendix 2 for Persistent Absence)

Issue	Letter	Action
4 lates recorded (in any half-term)	Late Letter	Lateness monitored by admin team.
		Report to HT if no improvement and consider referral to Family Liaison Officer/Attendance Officer.
Unexplained absence – family holiday suspected	Family Holiday Challenge	Reasonable explanation – absence authorised with appropriate code.
		Unreasonable explanation – absence recorded as unauthorised with appropriate code. If over 5 days - refer to LA for Penalty Notice.
Request for Leave of Absence - approved	Absence Authorised	Absence recorded as authorised with appropriate code.
Request for Leave of Absence - denied	Absence Unauthorised	Leave of Absence taken. If over 5 days - refer to Local Authority for Penalty Notice to be issued.
Where there is extended unauthorised absence without family contact Children Missing from Education procedures will apply. These will take into account any special arrangements.		

## Monitoring persistent absenteeism

Parent/carers will receive warning letters as per the guidance table at Appendix 2

The headteacher will need to consider each individual case of persistent absence as there may be authorised circumstances e.g. long-term medical reasons.

Within Persistent Absence Monitoring, headteachers should be aware of the Local Authority attendance checklist for referrals to the Education Welfare Lead which are:-

- Two consecutive weeks of unauthorised absence OR
- 5 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 5-week period, OR
- 10 sessions of authorised absence in a 5-week period where no medical evidence has been received.
- Persistent absence threshold met within the last 12 months and where there is some current unauthorised absence.

### Step 1 - Attendance Meeting (in person or telephone)

When attendance falls below or is close to 90%, parent/carers are contacted to ascertain the reasons for absence and discuss any support that may be offered by the school.

Parent/carers will be informed of procedure going forward should attendance not improve. An attendance target and date for review will be set (between 2 - 6 weeks).

Where attendance meets the agreed target, attendance continues to be monitored without intervention.

Where attendance does not improve, move to Step 2 - Attendance Panel (*informal*)

### Step 2 - Attendance Panel (*informal*)

If attendance has fallen below 90% and no improvement is seen or further unauthorised absence is incurred during the period of review, parent/carers will be asked to attend an informal Attendance Panel. At this meeting, the school and the family enter into a (voluntary) Parenting Contract and a further review period is set (minimum 4 weeks)

Where attendance meets the agreed target, attendance continues to be monitored without intervention.

Where attendance does not improve, move to Step 3 - Attendance Panel (*formal*)

### Step 3 - Attendance Panel (*formal*)

Following the period of review at Step 2, if no improvement is seen or further unauthorised absence is incurred during the period of review, parent/carers will be asked to attend a formal Attendance Panel with representation from Education Welfare. At this meeting, the school and the family enter into a (voluntary) Parenting Contract and a further review period is set (minimum 4 weeks).

Where attendance meets the agreed target, attendance continues to be monitored.

Where attendance does not improve, the family should be reported to the penalty notice team at the Local Authority. From this point forward, Education Welfare will be involved with the family and will advise/ with the school to improve attendance.

At Step 3, the family are informed of proceedings going forward which may include penalty notice or prosecution.