

Shipston High School



Attendance policy

Policy Author	SK
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2 Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance

- › Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- › Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- › Acting early to address patterns of absence
- › Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

3 Legislation and guidance

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](#)

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

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board is 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

4.2 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
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

4.3 The designated senior leader 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
- › Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

4.4 The attendance lead

The school attendance lead is responsible for:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents to the HOH in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance.
- › Working with Attendance services to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the designated senior leader for attendance when to issue fixed-penalty notices

4.5 Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS)

In liaison with the school Warwickshire Attendance Services (WAS) are responsible for:

- › Casework interventions including: comprehensive assessment, action planning, support and escalation
- › Coordinating Pre-Legal Meetings (PLM) and target setting in line with legal requirements
- › Attendance at multi-agency meetings where appropriate
- › Strategies and support to improve whole school and individual pupil attendance
- › Reviewing attendance processes and procedures
- › Developing targeted punctuality strategies
- › Data analysis

4.6 Class teachers/form tutors

- › Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office
- › Monitoring poor attendance through target cards
- › Creating an ethos of good attendance

4.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends school every day and on time
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:00am on the day of the and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend every timetabled session on time

5 Recording attendance

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

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.35 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:35am and will be kept open until 9:05am

The register for the second session will be taken at 2:50pm and will be kept open until 3:20pm

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office 01608 661833 or using the edulink one system.

We will mark the first three periods of absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

All subsequent periods of illnesses will be marked as unauthorised unless medical evidence is supplied such as a prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence is supplied to the school.

If the authenticity of any illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Please see the request for absence form at the end of this document. This form needs to be emailed to attendance@shipstonhigh.co.uk or handed to the main reception staff.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- › Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the home, contact social care, contact the police, inform the local authority or inform / take any action deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the child.
- › 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, visit the home, contact social care, contact the police, inform the local authority or inform / take any action deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the child.

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through electronic or written communication.

6 Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- › A major family event such as the wedding of a close relative (i.e. sibling, parent or grandparent)
- › Serious or terminal illness of a close relative (i.e. sibling, parent or grandparent)
- › Significant family trauma has occurred and it is believed that a break is in the child's best interests

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Authorised absence will only be authorized where a child has 97% or better attendance.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or at the end of this document. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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.

6.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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 or withdraw the notice.

7 Strategies for promoting attendance

- Engaging and challenging experiences in the classroom.
- Engaging experiences outside of the classroom.
- Attendance percentages written in student records each week.
- Tutor attendance display updated weekly.
- Place on attendance support card.
- Meeting with tutor and parents in school.
- Meeting with Pastoral leaders and parents.
- Use of the WAS to challenge, support and where necessary prosecute parents
- Bespoke rewards set with HOY and Year Team Leader.
- Parents Attendance Meetings

- › Weekly sharing of tutors' attendance progress in weekly staff briefing
- › PM targets to include attendance target for all tutors and Pastoral leaders.
- › Parent Contracts
- › Letters home thanking parents
- › Certificates
- › Celebration assemblies
- › Tutor board
- › Tutor group: experience rewards
- › Individual experience rewards
- › Tangible rewards
- › Bowling trips
- › Band experiences
- › Cinema Experiences
- › Muffin Mornings

8 Attendance monitoring

There are a number of staff at the Academy who monitor attendance and punctuality. The designated senior leader for attendance, The Attendance Lead (AL); Education Welfare Officer; form tutor; and head of house.

- › The designated senior leader for attendance has oversight of the whole system. The designated senior leader role is to oversee attendance and punctuality procedures and be aware of students who are a cause for concern. This member of staff keeps the Principal informed of any attendance/punctuality concerns.
- › The Attendance Lead is responsible for monitoring the attendance and punctuality of all students and informing the heads of house of any causes for concern. The Attendance Lead checks the registers and if a student is still absent by 9:05am and no communication has been received from the student's parent/carer then contact will be made with the student's parent/carer.

On a weekly basis, the Attendance Lead will provide data to show each Year group's attendance, authorised absence, unauthorised absence and persistent absence. This information will be disseminated to the head of house, headteacher, and designated member of SLT.

- › The form tutor's role is to monitor the attendance of his/her tutor group on a daily basis. The tutor will analyse attendance data and set attendance report cards with targets where necessary.

The tutor is also responsible for ensuring that absence notes are collected on a student's return to the School. The tutor is responsible for informing the head of house about students who are persistently late or who fail to attend detention.

- › The head of house working in conjunction with the designated senior leader, monitors attendance for the house. They are responsible for ensuring that their house meets or exceeds the Academy attendance target. The head of year will contact parents/carers where attendance falls below 97%, which may result in a meeting in the Academy to devise an attendance strategy.

The head of house is responsible for monitoring punctuality and for setting detention for any student who attends the Academy late (after the start of the tutorial session at 8:35 am). As with attendance issues, this may result in an invitation to parents/carers to attend a meeting at the Academy to support student punctuality.

- › The Attendance Lead works with all students whose attendance has fallen below 90% in addition to any other student whose attendance gives cause for concern and who is referred by the head of house.

The AO will meet with all students whose attendance is below 90% or whose attendance gives cause for concern, to devise an attendance strategy, under the direction of the head of house. The AO will also contact all parents/carers of students whose attendance is below 90% to attend a meeting at the school to support student attendance, again under the direction of the head of house. The AO monitors student attendance and, if it continues to fall, will refer to the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) for further support and/or potential prosecution.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- › Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- › Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

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.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- › Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- › Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors], and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- › Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- › Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- › Initiate early help support through the local authority

9 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum each academic year by The designated senior leader responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board or subsidiary.

10 Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

11 Appendix One: 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
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Appendix Two: Request for Absence

**Warwickshire County Council
Communities Group**

**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY**

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: _____ Form Group: _____

First Date of Proposed Absence: _____ Last date of Proposed Absence: _____

Expected date of return to school: _____

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence *(they can only be exceptional circumstances) (see overleaf before completing)*

.....
.....
.....

Total number of school days requested on this occasion

(For siblings) I have also applied to _____ School/Academy for leave of absence for _____ *(Insert child/children's name)*

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: _____ Date received by school: _____

1st date of absence requested: Last date of absence requested:.....

Absence Authorised: Yes/No If absence authorised, expected date of return to school:

The reasons for this decision are:.....
• LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead:Date:

- **Copy of this completed section to be sent back to parent with appropriate letter**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:

1. Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**
 - A) *An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides*

AND

 - B) *They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*
 2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
 3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.
-

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
 - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
 - Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
 - Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.
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Parents:

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will recorded as unauthorised.
3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.