



Shires Multi Academy Trust Attendance Policy

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1.0	July 2023	Policy written for the MAT

Safeguarding Statement The Shires Multi Academy Trust holds safeguarding at the core of its culture and fully recognises the risks associated with poor attendance. It is therefore policy and procedure that pastoral, safeguarding and attendance teams work in constant liaison through supportive, targeted and relentless intervention to reduce and alleviate any potential concerns, through effective early help and intervention.

Introduction

Our expectation is for all students to have 100% attendance and 100% punctuality to school and all lessons. There is strong statistical evidence to show that students who achieve this are more successful in school, make greater progress and that they are more likely to achieve their academic potential. The table below further highlights the link between attendance and learning:

If attendance over the school year is...	...the student will miss this many days	...and this many lessons
100%	0	0
95%	10	50
90%	19	95
85%	29	145
80%	39	195
75%	49	245
70%	58	290

In addition to the academic reasons for attendance, national research also shows:

- Children with poor attendance make less progress than their peers.
- Children with poor attendance struggle to make strong social connections and friendships
- Children with poor attendance are more at risk of safeguarding issues including bullying.

The Shires Multi Academy Trust (MAT) values achievement of every kind and believes that we all respond well to having high expectations placed upon us.

This policy has been written in line with the following guidance: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61231/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

Responsibilities

Although the legal responsibility for regular attendance at school rests with parents/carers, we regard the encouragement of good standards of attendance as a partnership with families designed to support the development of each individual student's potential.

If parents/carers have any concerns about their son/daughter's attendance or are concerned that there may be underlying reasons for him/her failing to attend school, then they should contact the attendance officer.

We ask that parents/carers support us by:

- not letting their son/daughter(s) take time off school for minor ailments.
- arranging appointments and outings after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays.
- not taking holidays during term time.
- ensuring that their son/daughter attends punctually at the beginning of every day.
- ringing or emailing by 9:00am on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the student will return (we have a dedicated section of our phone line for this purpose). We ask that this procedure is repeated for any subsequent days' absence.
- sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on the student's return to school after an illness (this is a legal requirement).
- keeping us informed by telephone, letter or email on every subsequent day of absence after the first day.
- letting us know if there is any on-going medical reason that prevents their son/daughter attending school.

Each school will:

- follow up all first day unexplained absences by phone call / email / text as soon as possible.
- continue to monitor the absence of a student who does not subsequently return to school as indicated with no explanation, treating this as a safeguarding concern.
- remind parents/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality via letters, newsletters and the school website.
- publish students' attendance rate as part of their school reports.
- inform parents/carers if we have concerns regarding a student's attendance.
- challenge regular lateness.
- refer any serious attendance concerns to the Local Authority and their Education Welfare Service.
- in extreme cases, work with the appropriate authorities and exercise all possible powers we have to enforce attendance including prosecution.
- inform the local authority and discuss arrangements for the education of students who are likely to be absent for 10 days or more.
- communicate with the local authority and alternative education providers to support students with medical needs.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Legally schools are required to distinguish and report on authorised and unauthorised student absence.

Lates and Punctuality

We believe that students need to develop good habits and be on time for school and every lesson. Schools will sanction students who are late, without good reason, in line with locally agreed protocols. Persistent lateness can lead to fixed penalty notices for parents/carers.

The DfE provides the following guidance on registration and coding lates:

'Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.'

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open. This should be the same for every session and depending on the structure of the school day not longer than either 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. (Working together to improve school attendance)

Late arrival before the register has closed will be marked as Code L and will count as present. A student arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with Code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Authorised Absence

A student's absence will be treated as authorised if he/she is unable to attend school due to illness, medical, dental treatment, the death of a close family member or where permission has been granted by the headteacher. Other authorised circumstances such as student study leave, work experience and educational visits will be entered by the school.

Parents/carers should note that, ideally, all medical and dental appointments should be arranged for after school so that students do not miss any lessons. Where this proves to be impossible then students should bring an appointment card to school and follow procedures in the relevant school's appendix in order to be granted leave of absence during the day. The student should then sign out at reception before leaving the school. In order that we might be sure of the whereabouts and safety of our students we ask that parents/carers ring the relevant school by 9:00am on the morning of the first day of absence to notify us of the situation as described above.

On return to school, a letter signed by the parents/carers is required to confirm the reason for absence and the dates involved. We ask that this letter is brought to school on the first day back.

In cases of long-term absence or where a student's attendance is causing concern, doctor's notes or other medical evidence will be requested and recorded.

Unauthorised Absence

If an absence cannot be authorised or a reason for absence is not forthcoming, the absence will be treated as unauthorised and parents/carers will be contacted by the school in order to seek a valid reason. It is at the school's discretion as to whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Extended Periods of Absence (including Holidays)

Please note, under recent amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) regulations, 2006, headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. All applications are assessed on an individual basis by each headteacher. In such exceptional circumstances, headteachers determine the number of school days a student can be away from school if the leave is granted. The government has not defined the 'exceptional circumstances' referred to in the amended regulations. It is for the headteacher to decide what is considered as exceptional circumstances. However, under these amendments, family holidays do **NOT** qualify as exceptional circumstances. However, leave to attend a high-level sporting commitment or to travel with the family due to the illness of a close family member may be deemed as exceptional circumstances. The schools' term dates are published a year in advance and are made available on their websites in the expectation that parents/carers will ensure that holidays are taken during school holiday times.

The strongest factor in underperformance at SATS, GCSE and A Level is irregular or poor attendance and it is our belief that we would be failing in our responsibility if we sanctioned time off school in all but the most exceptional circumstances. Parents/Carers are therefore asked to respect these new regulations under which we must now work, and that if there is a need to take your son/daughter out of school during term time, it must be made very clear in the request how the circumstances are exceptional. In such circumstances, requests for the school to authorise absence should be made by writing to the headteacher in advance, not in retrospect.

Applications for leave of absence, which are made and refused, will result in the absence being unauthorised, which may result in legal action against parents/carers, by Penalty Notice, if the student is absent from school during that period.

Work and absence

Every lesson missed is an opportunity missed. Although every effort is made to support students in catching up with work missed, simply cannot be made up, so students inevitably lose out and their progress will be affected.

- Students who have permission to be absent from school (see above) are expected to get work in advance from teachers and make up any written work missed as soon as they can.
- Students who are off school for an extended length of time may obtain work to complete during their absence. This may be obtained by contacting the relevant pastoral leader.
- Students who are absent without notice (e.g. due to illness) are expected to complete all work missed. We ask that parents/carers also monitor this, to ensure all work is completed.

Request for leave of absence

If medical or dental appointments have to be made in school time, an appointment card or a letter from parents/carers should be shown to the Attendance Officer at least 48 hours prior to the day concerned and a pass will be issued.

Parent/carers who would like to request a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances should write a letter to the headteacher in advance.

Part-time timetables

All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a student's individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package:

- A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution.
- Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the student is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision.
- A review must take place every two weeks.
- There must be documented evidence of parent/carer agreement to the part-time timetable, effectively agreeing to supervise the student when not in school

In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a student being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

Schools must inform the Local Authority, through the secure portal, of the initial arrangements for part-time timetables for all students and upon each review where the arrangements continue.

Students attending Off-site Provision-eg Alternative Provision, MET, work experience etc

All students who attend an off-site provision are members of the student community (and often vulnerable) and schools must ensure they are safeguarded at all times. Therefore, schools will:

- always make a daily phone call to the off-site provider to check if a student is present or absent;
- follow the same protocols as with other student absences by also contacting the parents/carers, in addition to any contact that the off-site provider may also make to pursue the reason for absence; and
- prioritise a home visit (where contact cannot be established with the parent/carer) to ensure the student is safe and well by the end of day 2.

Elective Home Education and Deregistration

The 1996 Education Act states that, *'it is the duty of parents to secure an appropriate full-time education for their children of compulsory school age'*. Parents/carers can carry out this duty by ensuring their child attends school or parents/carers may decide to take on the duty to educate their child/children themselves and educate them at home – this is called Elective Home Education.

We respect the right of parents/carers to educate their child at home, however, are aware that sometimes this is a response to dissatisfaction with school or other difficulty. We encourage parents/carers to discuss concerns with appropriate school leaders in order to allow the opportunity to find solutions and provide support.

On receipt of a written request to home educate, school leaders must complete all actions in line with the latest Worcestershire guidance, including documenting any meetings/interventions after elective home education has been discussed. The letter and learner profile (including risk assessment) and, where possible, the elective home education checklist must be sent to the Local Authority, through the secure portal, within 5 working days of the request being made.

In addition, an appropriate member of school staff will contact a family 3 weeks after the decision to home educate to offer further support or to enable the speedy process of readmission if a return is requested.

The numbers of students moving to home education is closely monitored by school leaders, MAT leaders and by Trustees. Schools must keep detailed records regarding elective home education and this is scrutinised regularly to ensure all legal processes and best practice guidelines are met.

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll only under certain circumstances defined in Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties. Students must not be deleted from the school roll without authorisation from the headteacher.

Where students have moved out of area, students are only deleted from the register when the school is satisfied that the student has been added to the register of a new provider. In cases where this cannot be established, schools must follow the 'de-rolling checklist' provided by the Local Authority.

If, having completed the checks, the student's whereabouts have not been determined, the school may remove the student from roll after 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence. The school should then immediately:

- Upload the student's CTF file to the LA data base entering the appropriate code
- Inform the Local Authority using the secure portal

Schools must keep detailed records of the actions taken as part of the de-rolling checklist.

After a permanent exclusion, schools must ensure that a student's name is removed from the school admissions register if 15 school days have passed since the parents/carers were notified of the governing board's decision to not reinstate the students and no application has been made for an independent review panel; or the parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel.

Where an application for an independent review panel has been made within 15 school days, the school must wait until the review has been determined, or abandoned, and until the governing board has completed any reconsideration that the panel has recommended or directed it to carry out, before removing a pupil's name from the register. Schools must inform the Local Authority immediately of the decision to permanently exclude a student in order to secure suitable sixth day provision.

Children Missing Education

- We ask all parents/carers to provide us with more than one emergency contact number. This gives us additional options to contact a responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.
- The Attendance Officer prioritises phone calls and home visits for key students.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) follows appropriate procedures when carrying out reasonable enquiries- e.g. discussions with neighbours, relatives, landlords etc to determine whether a child may be at risk of harm.
- There may be occasion where we have been unable to contact parents/carers after 2 days, have no information as to the whereabouts of the student, there is no answer at the home address and neighbours do not know of their whereabouts. In that case, the DSL or Attendance Officer will request the police do a safe and well check on the second or third day of absence. We inform social services, through the Worcestershire Family Front Door, to let them know we have requested a police safe and well check.
- We inform the local authority of any student who has missed 10 school days or more without permission.
- When appropriate, the DSL will make a referral to social services and/or police.

Safeguarding students attending alternative provision

As part of each school's offsite/alternative provision protocols, schools make daily contact with providers to ensure students have arrived at their placement. Absences are then pursued to fulfil safeguarding duties.

Attendance administration

In line with guidance, all schools keep registers for 3 years. Registers are recorded digitally using the MIS. We only use codes that are in line with current DfE guidance (see appendix 4).

All staff have a responsibility to record registers accurately. Only attendance officers have the access rights to amend registers and have a responsibility to record absence accurately and honestly in line with the coding guidance above.

Monitoring

Staff at each school monitor attendance and punctuality; this includes designated members of SLT team, Attendance Officer(s); pastoral leaders and the form tutor. There are other staff (e.g. school nurse, family support worker) who may monitor attendance as part of their work with individual students and families.

The processes and responsibilities for monitoring are outlined in the appendix for each school.

Notifications to the Local Authority

The Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers must ensure their children of compulsory school age receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parent/carers may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Further information can be found at [Legal Measures Information for Parents and Carers - Worcestershire Children First Education Services](#)

A school will intervene at a higher level if:

- A student's attendance declines below 90% unless appropriate medical evidence is provided to excuse absence
- A student's attendance declines rapidly and there is little evidence of parental/carer engagement.
- A student's attendance declines rapidly and parents/carers refuse to accept their responsibility for ensuring that their son/daughter attends the school every day and on time
- Parents/Carers condone their son/daughter's absence or truancy
- Parents/Carers remove their son/daughter from school for unauthorised absence – including for family holidays.

After negotiation with the school, the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice to a parent/carer. The Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid within 28 days. The local authority's code of conduct states that:

The issuing of a Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in cases of:

- An excluded child is found in a public place during the school hours of the first five days of exclusion
- Overt truancy is detected (including being caught on truancy sweeps)
- Parentally condoned absence is evidenced
- Unauthorised leave of absence has been taken (unauthorised family holidays)
- Delayed return from leave of absence without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed)

We are obliged to refer any issues to the Local Authority who will decide whether to issue a Penalty Notice.

The use of a Penalty Notice allows a parent/carer to discharge their liability for an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 by the payment of a fine. If the fine remains unpaid at the end of the 28-day payment period, the matter will automatically proceed to court for prosecution of the original offence unless the notice is withdrawn and the parent/carer will be notified in writing.

- Begin court proceedings when the school and Local Authority have exhausted all possible strategies
- It is hoped that the working partnership between the school, the parent/carer and the student will lead to positive outcomes with regard to any attendance and/or punctuality issues and avoid the need to begin legal proceedings. However, it should be noted, that if there is not an appropriate improvement in attendance and that if recourse has to be taken to legal action, this may result in a parental/carer fine of up to £2,500, a community order or, in extreme cases, a jail sentence of up to three months. If the court thinks it will help to stop your child missing school. The court may also impose a Parenting Order. Please see the following website for further details:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/parents/schoolslearninganddevelopment/yourchildswelfareatschool/dg_066966

Support for Attendance Issues

All schools in the MAT seek to be proactive when dealing with attendance issues and aim to provide high quality teaching, curriculum flexibility, mentoring and multi-agency working. If a student's absence gives cause for concern, a school leader will, where appropriate, instigate a support package.

Rewards and sanctions

All schools have a variety of rewards for attendance and punctuality. Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure students with medical conditions are not disadvantaged.

Students who are late (either to school or to lessons/tutor sessions throughout the day) will be sanctioned in accordance with the school's behaviour protocols if appropriate to the behaviour policy.

Students who abscond from lessons and/or leave the school site without permission at any time during the school day will be sanctioned in accordance with the Behaviour for Learning Protocols for each school.

Appendix 2: Ridgeway Secondary School Attendance Monitoring and Protocols

Overview of protocols

Times of day

Tutorial	8.30 – 8:57
Period 1	9.00 – 9.57
Period 2	10.00 – 11.00
Break	11.00 – 11.22
Period 3	11.25 – 12.22
Period 4	12.25 – 13:25
Lunch	13:25– 14:02
Period 5	14:05 – 15:05

Absence

- The school uses ARBOR to record student attendance during am/pm sessions and for all lessons. We ask that if a student cannot attend school on a particular day, that the parent/carer phones the Attendance Officer (01527 892867) by 9:00am, to report the absence or alternatively complete the online reporting mechanism via the website. We ask that this procedure is repeated for any subsequent days' absence.
- The school's Attendance Officer checks the registers and if a student is still absent by 9.00am and no communication has been received from the student's parent/carer then contact will be made with the student's parent/carer via text message and/or phone call.
- If contact has not been made from parents/carers to report a student absence, the school will classify the absence as unauthorised.

Late protocols

School begins with a tutorial session at 8.30am. All students must arrive to school and all lessons on time.

- If a student is marked late to school or lessons, without an appropriate reason the students will then be placed in a lunchtime detention, which takes place at lunchtime in room 23.
- 2 or more occasions of lateness in the same day will result in an 40 minute lunchtime detention.

Students will be marked as late (L) for the morning session until 9.40am, if they arrive after this time, they will be registered with a U code.

Lesson truancy

- Students are registered in every lesson. If a student is absent without permission, they have chosen to place themselves beyond our care. As soon as the absence has become apparent, parents/carers will be contacted and a sanction will be issued.
- If the student subsequently fails to comply with the school's attendance requirements, then parents/carers will be asked to attend an attendance panel meeting at the school.

Rewards

- Certificates
- Celebration assemblies

Details of the monitoring procedures

Roles and responsibilities

There are a number of staff at the school who monitor attendance and punctuality: Deputy Headteacher, Attendance Officer (AO); form tutor; and head of key stage.

The **designated member of the SLT** will:

- oversee attendance and punctuality procedures
- be aware of students who are a cause for concern
- inform the headteacher of any attendance/punctuality concerns

The **Attendance Officer** will:

- monitor the attendance and punctuality of all students and inform the heads of year of any causes for concern
- check the registers
- and if a student is still absent by 9:00am and no communication has been received from the student's parent/carer then contact will be made as soon as is practical with the student's parent/carer.

- on a weekly basis, 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 key stage and designated member of SLT.
- monitor punctuality and set detentions for any student who attends school or lessons late (after the start of the tutorial session at 8:40 am)
- liaise with heads of key stage to report punctuality concerns. As with attendance issues, this may result in an invitation to parents/carers to attend a meeting at school to support student punctuality.
- refer to the Local Authority for potential prosecution.
- meet with all students and parents and carers whose attendance is below 90% or whose attendance gives cause for concern, to devise an attendance strategy.

The **form tutor** will:

- monitor the attendance of their tutor group daily via Arbor.
- Notify the HoKS of any students close to or missing 7 sessions during the first half term.

The **head of key stage** will:

- monitor attendance for the whole key stage. They are responsible for ensuring that their year group meets or exceeds the school attendance target.
- contact parents/carers where a student has been absent for a total greater than 6 days which may result in a meeting in school to devise an attendance strategy.
- meet with all students and parents and carers whose attendance is below or whose attendance gives cause for concern, to devise an attendance strategy.

Thresholds for interventions

Stage	Number of Days off	Staff Responsibility	Response
1	3	Attendance Officer	Meeting
2	6	Attendance Officer	Attendance plan
3	9	HoKS	HoKS Attendance Plan
4	12	HoKS	HoKS Review SLT Involved
5	15	Deputy Headteacher	Deputy Headteacher Contract
6	18	Deputy Headteacher	Governor

Persistent Absence

Half Term	10%
Half term 1	7 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 2 (autumn term)	14 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 3	20 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 4 (autumn and spring term combined)	25 or more sessions
Half term 1 - 5	31 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 6 (full academic year)	38 or more sessions

Attendance Appendix: Webheath Academy Primary School

Aims:

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

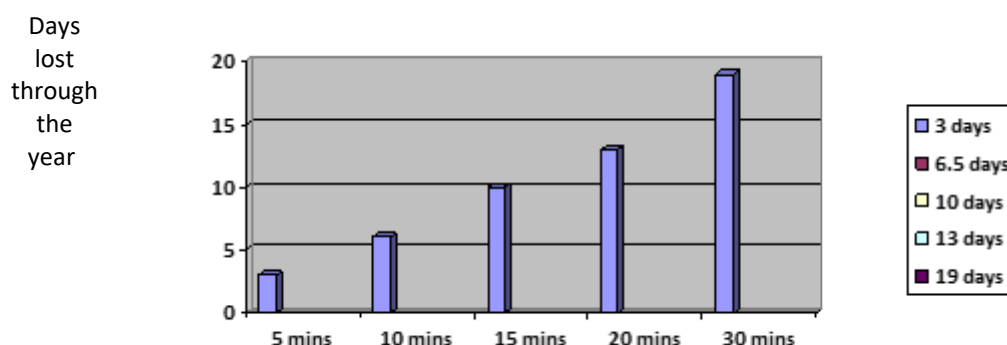
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- To minimise the disruption caused by late arrivals or non-attendance to the quality of the education and provisions for all pupils

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.

Punctuality:

Lessons begin promptly at **8.55am**. Arriving after this time can affect your child's progress. It also disrupts the classroom when lessons have already begun. Therefore, not only must children attend school regularly, but they must not be late.

The following graph clearly illustrates how being late can add up to a loss of learning:



As you can see, if your child is late for just 5 minutes every day, that can add up to over three days lost each year and arriving 15 minutes late each day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year: for that reason it is imperative that your child is punctual.

To reduce congestion at the beginning of the school day and help all of our children arrive on time, we do open our school gates at **8.35am**. Children are collected from the school playground at **8.45am** by staff and gates are closed at **8.50am**.

For Years 2-6, the school day finishes at **3.15pm**. Reception children can be collected from **3.05pm**.

Year 1 children can be collected between **3.10pm and 3.15pm**.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Pupils must arrive at school by 8.45am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am. A "Late" mark will be entered from 8.55am until 9.15am, from 9.15am onwards an "Unauthorised" mark will be made.

Attendance Register Procedures:

- The attendance register will be taken on Arbor 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

Codes for these marks can be found in a later appendix.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – **by 9am** or as soon as practically possible by leaving a message on the school absence line or sending an email to the office.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Medical or dental appointments

We encourage parents 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.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

Advance notification of appointments should be made to the office only, either by telephone or email.

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

We will email parents/carers on the first day for absences not reported. If we do not receive a response, we follow this up with a phone call. If absence continues the following day we will follow the Safeguarding Policy for missing children.

Reporting to parents

Attendance reports are issued to parents annually as part of pupils end of year Reports. Parents are able to access attendance records for their children via Arbor, our management information system via logging in on the app or online.

Whole School Positive Attendance Approach

A whole school approach is taken to encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality. Whole class 'on time' attendance is celebrated within classrooms and staff encourage attendance through discussion and positive anticipation of the events throughout the week and month with classroom calendars. Weekly assemblies identify and celebrate classes with the top 3 'on time' attendance. The attendance cup is awarded to class with the highest attendance and punctuality. Termly, a class is presented with the attendance award for the highest level of 'on time' attendance and this is displayed and referenced throughout the year. Individual children who demonstrate high levels of attendance receive acknowledgement both face to face and via an attendance celebration letter. Positive improvement letters are sent to children who have improved attendance following interventions as laid out below.

Attendance monitoring

The DSL responsible for attendance regularly monitors trends in attendance. Webheath work alongside the Worcestershire named Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO, school attendance office and Deputy Headteacher discuss pupil attendance and punctuality on a regular basis.

If a pupil's attendance goes below 95%, this is monitored and we may contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this, particularly if this is linked to unauthorised absences (including term time holidays).

Where attendance is poor, Webheath Academy Primary School will take the following action with parents/carers:

- Contact via Arbor and/or via telephone
- Contact via letter
- Meeting with Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or attendance officer
- Refer to EWO
- Refer to Governors
- Legal Action

If after contacting parents a pupil's attendance does not rise, we will insist on a meeting with the Head teacher or Deputy Head to resolve. We will use the Local authority support to meet with parents and the EWO may also attend. Further legal action may be taken if the level of absence continues.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

Persistent Absence

The definition of persistently absence (PA) pupil as set out by the DfE for 2015-2016 is a pupil with 10% or more absence (90% or less attendance). The table below, derived from the census guidance, gives an indication of the minimum number of sessions a pupil would miss by each half term to be classed as PA.

Half Term	10%
Half term 1	7 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 2 (autumn term)	14 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 3	20 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 4 (autumn and spring term combined)	25 or more sessions
Half term 1 - 5	31 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 6 (full academic year)	38 or more sessions

As a school, we collect attendance data on our management information system, Arbor. As per legal requirements, this data is shared with the local authority and nationally. Internally, we check this data on a weekly basis to look for patterns of absence across the school and at an individual level with a particular focus on those pupils in danger of being classed as PA. The school office staff, pastoral lead and Senior Leaders will then monitor these pupils and work with families to improve attendance. This data is then monitored by our Safeguarding Governor on his half termly visits and data is shared termly with the Governors in an anonymous way. This data is also shared with the Trustees to ensure the school are keeping PA to its lowest levels. Attendance of pupils that have a history of poor attendance, who are in receipt of free school meals or are vulnerable are a focus of this monitoring. From this, the school keep a record of identified children on Arbor.

The identified children are the focus of action and intervention and are discussed at meetings with attendance officers, designated attendance DSL and the EWO where appropriate. These identified children become a daily or weekly focus to ensure improvement. The school are committed to working with parents to help solve attendance issues and ensure regular attendance. As parents/carers have accepted a place at our school, it is an expectation that parents/carers will be committed to ensure attendance is as high as possible and pupils are always punctual.

Support

Using attendance patterns and trends, plans are made where necessary to deliver intervention to improve attendance and punctuality for specific children. This may include:

- First day call
- Identification of key adult to support and monitor attendance
- Pastoral call to speak to child
- Home visits
- Meeting and review with parent/child to identify cause of attendance/punctuality issue and identify actions to improve
- Support on arrival in enabling child to successfully access the classroom
- Short term alteration of entrance and exit points for child
- Incentives for attendance eg special classroom roles, sticker charts, improvement awards
- Parenting support – both internal and signposting to external agencies for development of routines, behaviour management etc
- Transport advice

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Deputy Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and seeks advice from the local authority regarding the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Deputy Headteacher has a responsibility for attendance at the school and acts alongside the office staff as an attendance officer. Contact can be made initially via the school office.

The office staff

The office staff act as attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Follows policy to ensure implementation
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher and Deputy Headteacher
- Works with education welfare officer to tackle persistent absence
- Manages and maintains correspondences
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis. Teachers record absence as an N code and attendance and correct codes are added by the school office. Class teachers are responsible for working with parents to ensure improved attendance for identified pupils. Class teachers are responsible for reporting any concerns about patterns of absence to the Deputy Headteacher, office staff and on CPOMS when it is considered a Safeguarding issue.

Office staff

Office staff are expected to check absence lines, emails and take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. Office staff are expected to contact parents when absence has not been reported as per the policy guidelines.

Links with other policies

Our policy for attendance is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy, Friendship and Anti-Bullying Policy and our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Attendance Appendix: Feckenham CE Primary School

We know that poor attendance can be an indication of safeguarding issues for a pupil, their sibling and family, therefore we monitor attendance carefully.

Aims:

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
- To minimise the disruption caused by late arrivals or non-attendance to the quality of the education and provisions for all pupils

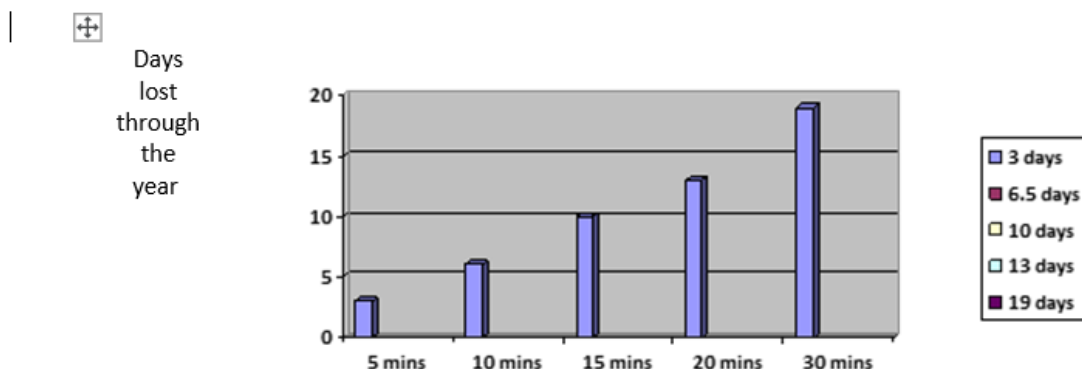
We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Arriving on time:

School begins with the school bell at 8.30am and all pupils are expected to be at school on time ready to start their learning for the day.

Lateness inevitably means that a child misses out on their full learning entitlement and can be upsetting and/or embarrassing for children.

The following graph clearly illustrates how being late can add up to a loss of learning:



Attendance Register Procedures:

- The attendance register will be taken on Arbor 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

Codes for these marks can be found in a later appendix.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – **by 9am** or as soon as practically possible by leaving a message on the school absence line or sending an email to the office.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Medical or dental appointments

We encourage parents 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.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

Advance notification of appointments should be made to the office only, either by telephone or email.

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

We will email parents/carers on the first day for absences not reported. If we do not receive a response, we follow this up with a phone call. If absence continues the following day we will follow the Safeguarding Policy for missing children.

Reporting to parents

Attendance reports are issued to parents annually as part of pupils end of year Reports.

Attendance monitoring

The Headteacher regularly monitors attendance.

If a pupil's attendance goes below 95%, this is monitored and we may contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this, particularly if this is linked to unauthorized absences (including term time holidays).

Where attendance is poor, Feckenham CE Primary School will take the following action with parents/carers:

- Contact via telephone or face to face
- Contact via letter
- Meeting with Headteacher
- Refer to EWO
- Refer to Governors
- Legal Action

If after contacting parents a pupil's attendance does not rise, we will insist on a meeting with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. We will use the Local authority support to meet with parents and the EWO may also attend. Further legal action may be taken if the level of absence continues.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

Persistent Absence

The definition of persistently absence (PA) pupil as set out by the DfE for 2015-2016 is a pupil with 10% or more absence (90% or less attendance). The table below, derived from the census guidance, gives an indication of the minimum number of sessions a pupil would miss by each half term to be classed as PA.

Half Term	10%
Half term 1	7 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 2 (autumn term)	14 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 3	20 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 4 (autumn and spring term combined)	25 or more sessions
Half term 1 - 5	31 or more sessions
Half term 1 – 6 (full academic year)	38 or more sessions

Persistent Absence for a child has a significant impact on their learning outcomes and also their overall experience of being in their school community. It is vital that we all work to reduce the possibility of a child becoming a persistent absentee.

Attendance is monitored closely and if a child is causing us concern then we may:

- First day call
- Identification of key adult to support and monitor attendance
- Pastoral call to speak to child
- Home visits
- Meeting and review with parent/child to identify cause of attendance/punctuality issue and identify actions to improve
- Support on arrival in enabling child to successfully access the classroom
- Short term alteration of entrance and exit points for child
- Incentives for attendance
- Parenting support – both internal and signposting to external agencies for development of routines, behaviour management etc
- Transport advice

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The office staff

The office staff act as attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Follows policy to ensure implementation
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher and Deputy Headteacher
- Works with education welfare officer to tackle persistent absence
- Manages and maintains correspondences
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis. Teachers record absence as an N code and attendance and correct codes are added by the school office. Class teachers are responsible for working with parents to ensure improved attendance for identified pupils. Class teachers are responsible for reporting any concerns about patterns of absence to the Deputy Headteacher, office staff and on CPOMS when it is considered a Safeguarding issue.

Office staff

Office staff are expected to check absence lines, emails and take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. Office staff are expected to contact parents when absence has not been reported as per the policy guidelines.

Links with other policies

Our policy for attendance is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy, Friendship and Anti-Bullying Policy and our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Appendix 4: Attendance Codes

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore, by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

'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.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

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Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

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Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

