Attendance Policy

Date of last review: June 2023

Reviewed by: Mrs Smith

Agreed by Governors:

Frequency of review: Annually

Date of next review: June 2024

Contents

1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure students attend school every day (190 days per year). A child's attendance at school is one of the most important factors in their education. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is also essential for pupils to maximise their chances of success. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed in a timely manner.

There is clear evidence showing strong links between excellent exam results and excellent school attendance. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable: students who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching time.

Parents/Carers are responsible for their child's attendance and punctuality. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance and punctuality.

2. Government expectations

Our school will:

➢ promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
➢ ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
➢ act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents will:

➢ perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

All students will:

➢ be punctual to school and their lessons.
➢ be encouraged to achieve full attendance and punctuality.
➢ record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence.
➢ acknowledge and accept rewards for a successful record of attendance.

In addition, the school will:

➢ Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued as a member of our school community.

➢ Encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in ensuring and promoting their child's attendance.

➢ Ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance and take the registers accurately and timely.

➢ Regularly share attendance and punctuality information with parents and students.

➢ Ensure regular monitoring evaluation of the attendance policy and procedures by the school Leadership Team and the School Governors.

➢ Include attendance and punctuality in the School Improvement Plan

➢ The school is responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all students who are on the school's admission roll. In addition, lesson registers are taken each lesson.

3. Procedures

3.1 Attendance register

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

➢ Present.
➢ Attending an approved educational activity.
➢ Absent.
➢ Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:

➢ Ascertain the reason.
➢ Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken.

- ➢ Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- ➢ Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

Registration occurs each morning and begins at 8.40am and ends at 9.10am. Students not in their tutor rooms at 8.40am in the morning receive a late mark and a late detention with their tutor.

Subject teachers are responsible for ensuring an accurate register is taken during every lesson in the first 10 minutes of a lesson. Where SIMS registers are unavailable paper registers must be taken and sent to reception for recording.

Students will be reminded about the importance of punctuality and lateness will result in sanctions being set.

First day contact between parents and school will be made via text by the attendance clerk and followed up with a phone call from the Pastoral Leader where necessary.

Staff are supplied with clear guidance on what is authorised and unauthorised absence following DfE guidelines.

Any emerging attendance concern/problem within a Year Group will be discussed and action planned within the weekly Tutor Group meetings and the 'Overcoming Barriers to Learning' (OB2L) meeting. Here further action is decided upon involving both internal support and involvement of external agencies.

3.2 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 – ideally by the start of the school day or as soon as practically possible. If absence continues, parents are expected to contact the school on each day that the child is absent.

Parents can notify the school by ringing the main school number and either reporting to reception or leaving a voice recorded message (02476450215). Parents should give a reason for their child's absence, and if possible, an estimated duration of absence.

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. We will however request medical evidence if there is a history of extended or sporadic absence and/or for absences lasting longer than 5 days.

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.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

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

However, we strongly encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible to avoid missing out on critical learning. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. If medical appointments take place in the morning, students are expected to come into school after the appointment. If medical appointments are taken during the school day, students are expected to return to school unless there is a medical reason that prevents this.

3.4 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 that arrive late (between 8.40 and 9.10am) will be sanctioned according to the school's escalation policy – 'Late 1' on the first occasion 15mins same-day detention at break, 'Late 2' on the second occasion 30mins same-day detention at break. On the 3rd (and every other) occasion an After-School Same-Day Detention will be set. This escalation procedure will re-start at the beginning of each new half term. Tutors will endeavour to inform parents after 'Late 2' is given and will communicate with parents each time an After-School Detention is set (as per the school's behaviour policy).

Pupils who arrive after 9.10am will automatically be set an After-School Same Day Detention by the Pastoral Leader and Head of Year.

Pupils who arrive after 10:08am will be marked as 'U' and this will be counted as an unauthorised absence.

Pupils must provide an explanation (either in writing or by contacting the school) if there is a legitimate reason for their late arrival at school – the school will not sanction students for being late, where the reason is beyond reasonable control of the student and their parent(s).

3.5 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.

The Pastoral Leaders or a member of the attendance team will phone, email and complete home visits. Vulnerable/SEND students will be prioritised. Further details about our processes and time frames with regard to vulnerable/SEND student absences are detailed below.

The attendance officer will then amend codes – from N to the appropriate code, e.g. I (illness). In instances where communication is not successful, the Pastoral Leader will record the attempted contact as a note on the attendance register.

After 3 days of consecutive absence, the child's tutor will endeavor to make contact. The purpose of this call is not to chase absence, but to offer support to the child – e.g. offering to collate 'catch-up' work.

After 5 days of consecutive absence, the child's Head of Year will endeavour to make contact – again as a supportive measure.

If any safeguarding concerns arise as a result of these communications, the relevant staff member should report it immediately to the DSL via CPOMS (as per safeguarding and child protection policies).

In addition, any student with a social worker (e.g. children who are LAC or subject to a CP plan) who is absent for 5 or more consecutive days (or whose emerging pattern of attendance is likely to lead to persistent absenteeism) will be reported via email (titled 'attendance concern') to their allocated social worker. The email will include the child's name, date of birth and a brief summary of the concern, with attendance figures or details of the period(s) of absence.

If any safeguarding concerns arise as a result of these communications, the relevant staff member should report it immediately to the DSL via CPOMS (as per safeguarding and child protection policies).

If further absence exists, the DSL may follow procedures for reporting pupils as CME (Child Missing in Education) if it is unclear where the child is during the period of absence from school and/or contact with home has not been successful. A child must be considered as CME (and therefore reported to CME@coventry.gov.uk) if they are absent for 10 consecutive days, without any successful contact made between the school and home.

The school will also endeavour to provide home visits to students not attending school as a result of possible EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance), RHTs (Reduced Hours Timetable), attendance at Alternative Provision or if there is a concern about the child welfare at home and/or at risk of becoming CME (child missing in education).

If a child does meet the criteria for CME, the DSL may follow procedures for reporting pupils as CME (Child Missing in Education), particularly if it is unclear where the child is during the period of absence from school and/or contact with home has not been successful. A child must be considered as CME (and therefore reported to CME@coventry.gov.uk) if they are absent for 10 consecutive days, without any successful contact made between the school and home.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

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

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Where absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parents or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue
- The death or terminal illness of a direct relative
- Out of school programmes and/or activities, such as music, arts or sport operating at a high level of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of an immediate relative

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- 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

Term-time holidays (for any other reason than detailed above) will not be authorised – and parents are likely to be fined, through issuance of a Penalty Notice by the school if holidays are repeatedly taken during term time.

Legal action may also be taken against parents where students are regularly absent from school. Penalty Notices will be considered following prior warning

and attempts at support. Where students are regularly absent, the Pastoral Leader will attempt to support the student and parent by agreeing a plan of support in hope of improved attendance so that legal action can be avoided.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made at least 2 weeks in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.

Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Student absence will be reviewed by the Pastoral

Leader on a half termly basis (as a minimum) to inform this process. Some students may be reviewed more regularly if a pattern of persistent absenteeism emerges.

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

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

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

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

5. Persistent Absenteeism

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance falls **below 90%** at any time during their school life. Absence at this level is detrimental to a child's education.

All students whose attendance have fallen to 85% or are at risk of moving towards the PA will be monitored rigorously through the pastoral systems.

Support and action towards all PA students are automatically reviewed daily in Tutor group meetings and on at least a weekly basis with the inclusion team.

Daily contact with parents / carers will be made to encourage attendance and to review possible barriers to attendance.

6. Supporting and re-integrating students on long term absence

Pastoral Leaders will advise Heads of Department about students with long term absence and medical conditions and will co-ordinate requests for work to be set for completion at home. Heads of Department will respond promptly to these requests, organise setting work, leaving it for collection and the marking of returned work.

Students who have been absent long term and who need to catch up on school work will spend a negotiated amount of time working with Student Support doing work set by Heads of Department. This time and re-integration support will be managed by the Pastoral Leader in liaison with the inclusion team. Some students returning after long term absence will be considered for an alternative curriculum involving fewer subjects and some study time in the support centre until they are able to integrate fully into the mainstream curriculum. Students who are school phobic or who have undergone recent crisis will be supported by the inclusion team where appropriate.

The Headteacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made at least 2 weeks in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.

Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

7. Leadership and Management of the Policy

The role of the Headteacher/Governors

➤ The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
➤ The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

The role of Deputy Head

➤ Advise on and implement whole school strategies for improving attendance.

- ➢
  Monitor progress towards targets and complete a regular evaluation of both the impact of the Attendance Policy and planned work identified in the School Improvement Plan
- ➢ Liaise with the Director of Key Stages and the SENCo to co-ordinate early identification, interventions, rewards and set year team targets. **The role of The Key Stage Directors**

- ➢ Monitor attendance data, analyse data to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice through weekly attendance and OB2L meetings with the Head of Year.
- ➢ Monitor the progress of key groups of student's attendance towards target.
- ➢ Monitor students who are persistently late to school and lessons. Set targets, ensure sanctions are completed and/or students are rewarded for overcoming barriers.
- ➢ Liaise with Deputy to identify students who would benefit from working with the local authority.
- ➢ Liaise with the SENCo to identify students who would benefit from a referral to the Extended School Non-attendance Advisory Panel. **The role of the Head of Year**

- ➢ Monitor the progress of individual, identified groups, year group attendance towards targets.
- ➢ End of every day, ensure that all registers are up to date, completed and accurate, including all unexplained absences are followed up.
- ➢ Attend weekly attendance and OB2L meetings with Director of Key Stage and Pastoral Leader.
- ➢ Monitor attendance letters weekly and support Pastoral Leaders in ensuring this takes place weekly.
- ➢ Promote good school attendance through an extensive reward system.
- ➢ Meet with parents/carers if there are attendance issues.
- ➢ Set targets for students who are persistently late to school and/or lessons and arrange a meeting with parents.
- ➢ Ensure students complete sanctions for lateness and reward students who should improvement.

The Role of the Pastoral Leader

- ➢ Work with form tutors and HOY to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.
- ➢ Ensure that all registers are up to date and complete and to chase up attendance records that are incomplete.
- ➢ Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns.
- ➢ Co-ordinate interventions for students whose attendance is causing concern with a focus on students whose attendance has dropped or is likely to drop below 90% (persistent absentees)
- ➢ Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents, CFFW and outside agencies.

- ➤
  Promote good school attendance by setting targets and award 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.
- ➤ Ensure that students who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and co-ordinate re-integration back in to school upon their return with Student Support.
- ➤ Ensure that 'CAFs' are opened as necessary to support children in attending school regularly and on time.
- ➤ Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as necessary around Children Missing Education
- ➤ Support the Year team with late detentions and have learning conversations with students struggling with punctuality issues.

- ➤ Make daily contact with parents/carers by phoning, emailing and completing home visits when a student is not in school.

The Role of the Class teachers/form tutors

- ➤ To complete the register within the first 10mins of the lesson.
- ➤ To complete the register accurately and report any students who are identified as missing/truanting immediately through our On-Call

8. Staged Approach to Monitoring Attendance

Wave 1

- ➤ Tutors monitor the attendance of their tutees daily. They meet with students on their return to school to identify any barriers or support the student may need.
- ➤ Pastoral Leaders monitor year group attendance and identify patterns/trends.
- ➤ Pastoral Leaders identify students who are at risk of dropping below 96%. Early intervention put in place, phone call home to parents.

- ➤ Make daily contact with parents/carers by phoning, emailing and completing home visits when a student is not in school.

Wave 2 – attendance drops below 96%

- ➤ Pastoral Leader issues stage one letter. Letter attached to Sims and CPOMs.
- ➤ Tutor meets with student. Targets set for two-week monitoring period. Log on APP Tracker/CPOMS.

Wave 3 – attendance drops below 95%

- ➤ Pastoral Leader issues stage two letter. Meeting to take place with tutor and pastoral leader. New targets set for two-week monitoring period. Letter attached to Sims and CPOMs. Log on APP Tracker/CPOMs. **Wave 4 – attendance drops below 90%**

- ➤ Head of Year issues stage three letter. Meeting to take place with Head of Year and Pastoral Leader. Parental contract put in place. New targets set for four-week monitoring period.

➤
Wave 5 – involvement of external agencies

Pastoral Leader, Head of Year refer to Director for referral to Local Authority involvement. Another monitoring period under the supervision of the Local Authority. No improvement, Fixed Penalty Notice.

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