

# **Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Approved by		T&L Committee Governors
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## Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	4
4. Recording attendance	5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	9
8. Monitoring arrangements	9
9. Links with other policies	9
Appendix 1: attendance codes	10

## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence to students and their parents / carers
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Have a clear policy on absence and absence protocols
- Have effective systems for monitoring attendance
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Support more vulnerable students who cannot attend school at above 97%

For a child to reach their full academic potential a high level of school attendance is essential. Every child needs to be in school every day and the school will actively convey this message to students and their parents / carers.

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

The School's success is based on **CARE**:

**Community** - We want our students to know the importance of values and respecting differences

**Aspire** - We want our students to know that their possibilities are limitless, no matter what their standing point is

**Resilience** - We want our students to develop resilience

**Educated students** - Our students access a broad and rich curriculum and make informed option choices to support their future learning and aspirations

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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

- 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.

### 2.1 Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, students will only be deleted from a school register when one of the following applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The student is no longer compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures completed
- Death of the student
- Transfer between schools
- Student is withdrawn from the school to be home educated
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the student
- A medical condition prevents attendance and return to school before ending compulsory school age
- The student is in custody for 4 months or more (in consultation with The Youth offending Team)
- After 20 days of continuous unauthorised absence and both the school and local authority have been unable to locate the student

The school will follow Trafford Local Authority's Children Missing from Education protocols when a child's whereabouts are not known. If the school has any safeguarding concerns about a child missing from education the police and social care will be informed.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

At Stretford High School every member of the school community will have a role to play in improving school attendance. This includes staff, governors, students and parents / carers.

Attendance data is reported to Trafford Local Authority and Department for Education annually through the census and to the Governing Body termly. This information is collected in SIMS.

#### 3.1 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 governing body will support the school by:

- Scrutinising and approving the school policy on attendance
- Reviewing school data on attendance and persistent absence at termly meetings
- Set annual targets for attendance

#### 3.2 The headteacher and leadership team

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Department of Education and school governing body as required
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Ensuring a pastoral team is engaged in attendance monitoring and have the training, resources and capacity to do this effectively
- Ensuring that good attendance is a responsibility shared by all staff

#### 3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with Trafford Local Authority to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Makes recommendations or request for further support where interventions do not have the desired effect

#### 3.4 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 promptly and accurately.

### **3.5 Student Services**

Student services team are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 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 name of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

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 8:30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:30am and will be kept open until 9:00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:25 pm and will be kept open until 1:35pm.

### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents / carers should inform the school by telephone, text or via the MyEd app on the first day of absence and provide the school with a reason for the absence and an expected date of return.

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### **4.3 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.

Parents / carers should inform the school by telephone, text or via the MyEd app about medical appointments, and should send copies of appointment letters where applicable.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

### **4.4 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

Late arrival will follow with on the day consequences. A text will be sent home to inform parents / carers. Persistent lateness will result in individual interventions and parental meetings.

### **4.5 Following up absence**

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

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by speaking with the parent/carer on a daily basis or conducting home visits if we are unable to get in contact with the parent/carer
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance will be reported to parents after each progress review (PR) cycle with the following categories identified:

EXCEPTIONAL ATTENDANCE	BLUE	98%+
GOOD ATTENDANCE	GREEN	96 – 97.9%
REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT ATTENDANCE	AMBER	93 – 95.9%
POOR ATTENDANCE	RED	LESS THAN 92.9%

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

If there are exceptional circumstances then the Headteacher or Deputy Head Teacher will determine how many school days the student can be away from the school but it will be marked as unauthorised.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' on a case by case basis.

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

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

Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the [headteacher/head of school] may grant term-time holiday

Study leave

Flexi-schooling requests

## 5.2 Reducing persistent absence

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to below 90% for any reason. If a student is absent for 38 sessions or 19 days during the year they are considered as persistently absent. At this level of attendance considerable damage is being done to the child's educational outcomes.

If a pupil is identified as persistently absent (attendance below 90%) without exponential circumstance or showing signs of improvement we will complete an Attendance Support Plan (ASP) that will be drawn up between school and the parent / carer. It can also be extended to include other agencies who may be offering support to the family and is intended to resolve the difficulties causing the attendance problems. Absence due to illness will require medical evidence.

All students who are PA will be tracked by the Attendance Officer. External agencies may also be informed for targeted support. The Local Authority is informed of all PA students.

The school may issue a Penalty Notice or refer to the Local Authority for legal proceedings.

## 5.3 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.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Breakfast club is available from 8.00am
- The school website will feature the attendance policy and attendance matters and will be kept updated
- Attendance will be celebrated weekly with epraise points for students achieving 100% attendance
- Individual students will receive personal recognition for 100% attendance each term (Rewards and certificates)
- The forms, houses and year groups with the best attendance will be celebrated on a weekly and termly basis
- Residential trips with school will be available (only) to students with 95% attendance or better



## 7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis

If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days, the school will conduct a home visit to discuss the reasons for this. If we are unable to make contact on the visit we will leave a calling card for you to contact us.

If the pupil is still absent on the third day and we have been unsuccessful making contact with the parent/carer then we will report to the police for them to conduct a welfare check.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school **each** day their child is ill.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the local authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

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.

Attendance data is collected using SIMS, stored securely, and used for internal purposes. For example, to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the Assistant Head Teacher of Behaviour and Attendance . At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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

<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day