



“Learning, achieving and thriving as a school family through God’s love.”

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29 v11)

Attendance Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. These are the attendance codes that we use:

Code	Explanation
/	Present am
\	Present pm
B	Attending any other Approved Educational Activity
C	Other authorised circumstances
C1	Approved leave for regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Approved absence for part time timetable

D	Duel registration
E	Suspended or excluded
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
I	Illness
J1	Interview for employment or transfer
L	Late before register closed
M	Medical/dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided
O	Unauthorised/unknown circumstances
P	Approved sporting activity
Q	Lack of access arrangement
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave for public examination
T	Travelling with parent for occupational purposes
U	Late (after registration closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
Y1	Normal transport not available
Y2	Widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unavoidable partial disclosure
Y4	Unavoidable full disclosure
Y5	Criminal justice detention
Y6	Public health guidance/law
Y7	Unavoidable other than Y1-6
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole or partial closure
–	All should attend/no mark recorded
7	Illness due to Covid 19
8	Self-isolating due to Covid 19
9	Shielding due to Covid 19

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school or emails to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3 If a child is absent

3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian if we have not been informed of the reason for the absence. The parent should inform the school, before 9.30am, that the child will be absent and why, an answering machine message is acceptable or an email.

3.2 When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence unless the school has been informed by telephone (including answering machine message), email or in person.

3.3 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013

Amendments have been made to the 2013 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments, as described below, will come into force in February 2015.

Term-time holiday

The school will 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 of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. In recognition of this, the law makes it an offence for a parent or carer to fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a school at which the child is a registered pupil, without good reason or the agreement of the school.

Unauthorised Absence

A referral to the Local Authority will be made if there is unauthorised absence of least 10 sessions (each school day contains two sessions) this may comprise of any unauthorised absence or late arrival at school or alternative provision over a rolling period of 10 school weeks, excluding school holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.

Unauthorised Leave of Absence

If in an individual case the Local Authority believes a penalty notice is appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the 10-session threshold is met. In such instances there must be at least 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in term time not authorised by the head teacher over a period of 10 rolling school weeks or any period of leave more than the period authorised by the head teacher.

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Attendance.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Documents/Penalty-Notice-Code-of-Conduct-July-24-FINAL.pdf>

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024

Amendments have been made to the 2013 Regulations in The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2024. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 19 August 2024.

New Two Penalty Notice Limit in a Three-Year Period

- The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them after the 19th August 2024. The first penalty notices for leave in term time will increase to £160 per parent per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.
- If a second penalty notice is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the County Council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1,000. Please note this is taken from when the unauthorised leave from school occurs and not when the booking was made.

5 Repeated unauthorised absences

DUTY TO REFER:

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013: schools have a **DUTY** to refer to the Local Authority if a child of compulsory school age is continuously absent from school for two weeks without explanation, or if his/her attendance is irregular, which is interpreted to mean those pupils who have patterns of unauthorised absence without amassing 10 days continual absence.

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

ALL non-attendance should raise concerns: whether covered by a note or not – it is the head teacher's responsibility to authorise or not authorise an absence, the EWO should be aware of concerns teachers have about irregular attendance that is covered by parents – this is 'condoned absence'. That is the offence in law. Reducing this

type of absence is where the improvement in attendance rates can be made. Therefore, please consider TOTAL absences when making a referral.

- 5.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 5.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

6 Attendance targets

- 6.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the headteacher and governors at the annually. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets. Our current target is: 95%

7 Monitoring and review

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will be presented with a report from the headteacher each term. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 7.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 7.3 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the headteacher immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 7.4 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

8 Late

A child will be marked as late in the register if they arrive by 9.15am after the register has closed. Persistent lateness will result in appropriate intervention been taken e.g. referral to a parent support worker, meeting with headteacher. Currently the definition for unauthorised persistent lateness is '10 sessions of late arrivals in a 10-week period'.

9 Return to school advice

Advice regarding if a child needs to be at home with a particular condition will be taken from the infection control guidelines. Children should not return to school for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

10 Children at Risk of Missing Education

The school has in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, the school holds an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice

Where school staff have concerns about a child, we use our professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform the decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

We notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

In this instance the school provides the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;
- the grounds under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Signed: J Cushing

Date: 26.9.2024

Review date: September 2024