



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of Policy: September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

Who the review will involve: Headteacher, Senior Leadership team

Senior member of staff responsible for overseeing that this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed: Mike Clancy (Assistant Headteacher)

Senior School attendance champion: Mike Clancy

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DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION

This policy was formulated by a working party consisting of the Senior Leadership Team Staff and Pastoral Team. The policy has been designed using guidance from the following legislation that set out the legal powers and duties the 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance 2024](#)
- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

INTRODUCTION

The Avon Valley School and Performing Arts College is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all of our students. We expect all of our students to attend school every day when the school is in session.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. We, therefore, strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all of our students. Attendance is a critical factor to a successful school career and we actively celebrate and encourage students to achieve the highest person attendance possible, with the aspiration, that students achieve 100% attendance to school where possible.

We recognise that parents play a pivotal role in ensuring their child's attendance and we actively strive to ensure strong and positive home-school links. Should any problems arise which may affect a student's regular attendance, we will work in partnership with parents, students and, where necessary, the Local Authority, to identify and resolve these problems as quickly as possible. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our aims and objectives in relation to our students' attendance are to:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Promote the importance of good attendance for pupils' own personal progression and achievement.
- Maintain a consistent whole school approach to attendance
- Record and monitor attendance and review this regularly to minimise and improve absenteeism (persistent and severe) and unauthorised absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled..
- Maintain and promote positive links between school and home, providing support where needed in a timely manner.
- Discourage families from arranging holidays during school terms
- Ensure that parents are aware of when it is appropriate for their child to be absent from school and to understand the possible consequences of failing to ensure their child's regular attendance.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

OUR PRINCIPLES

We recognise the importance that all of our students and parents feel supported. We will therefore:

- encourage parents to actively promote their child's full time attendance
- provide information to students and parents relating to attendance
- ensure all staff are aware of registration requirements relating to attendance and the Law.
- work with external agencies to support students and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.
- ensure all staff have access to regular safeguarding training
- consult with school staff members, school Governors and Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) in maintaining our Attendance Policy and to improve our practice.
- ensure that school staff and parents are familiar with and adhere to our procedures for registering students' attendance, and reporting, recording and following up a student's absence or lateness.

STATUTORY DUTY

Under Section 7 of the Education act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a full time education, either by regular attendance at

school or otherwise. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered.

If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at school fails to attend regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The school is responsible for recording a student's attendance twice a day; at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This entry must be made for all students of compulsory school age who are on the admission roll, including those on alternative curriculum courses through the C.L.M. system.

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school on the first day of their child's absence. Should the school have not been notified by 9.15am on the first day of a child's absence; the Attendance Officer will acknowledge via ClassCharts/text/contact the child's parent/carer.

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register and will inform the Attendance Officer who will endeavour to contact the parent/carer to determine the reason for absence.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or carer to explain the absence and confirm its duration.

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

Parents are responsible for ensuring that the school's database is kept up to date by notifying the school as soon as possible if there are any changes in contact details or circumstances.

Parents should try to avoid any unnecessary absences by making medical appointments outside of the school day. Should this be unavoidable; medical appointment cards should be provided to the school to authorise those absences.

Parents should talk to their child about school and notify the school if their child is experiencing any difficulties. Parents should take active involvement in their child's work and progress and maintain regular communication with the school during any period of absence so that the school, where necessary, can either involve outside agencies or offer reintegration programmes if appropriate.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader Mike Clancy (Assistant Headteacher). Mike can be contacted on the following email address: mclancy@avonvalleyschool.uk

The senior attendance champion is responsible for:

Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school

Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance

Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff

Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed

Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues

Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers

Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

These procedures are to ensure and promote a whole school awareness of attendance:

Lateness:

- The first register of the day opens at 8.45am and closes at 9.15am. Registration is not only a legal requirement but is an important point of a child's day where information is often given out to all students. Lateness can also cause disruption to a class and embarrassment for the child arriving after the registration has started.
- Any child who arrives after the registration 8.45am but before 9:15am will be recorded as late
- Any student arriving after 9:15am will receive an unauthorised absence mark which will impact on their overall attendance, unless a medical note is provided.
- Records of persistent late attenders will be kept and discussed with parents for further intervention if felt necessary, one hour late detentions are held every Thursday evening as a sanction for lateness.

Absences:

- First day contact of absence and notes to be provided on child's return
- Weekly/fortnightly reviews of attendance by the Pastoral Team in time-tabled meetings.

- All students with below 95% attendance will be closely monitored and contact made with parents where necessary, to offer support from the Pastoral Team.
- Students who have three consecutive days' absence or more due to illness, parents may be requested to provide medical evidence to the school.

Children Missing Education:

Where a student has **10 consecutive days of unexplained absence ('N' Codes)** and '**all reasonable steps**' have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school should make an immediate referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS).

Reasonable steps include:

- telephone calls to all known contacts
- letters home
- contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- possible home visits where safe to do so
- enquiries to friends, neighbours etc through school contacts
- enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the child/family
- all contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the student's file

Definition of Authorised Absence:

- An absence is classified as authorised when the child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer of that child. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Exceptional cases of religious observances or particular family circumstances may also result in an authorised absence being granted by the school
- Only the Headteacher of the school can make an absence authorised. **Parents and carers do not have this authority.** Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be recorded as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or allows a child to stay out of school to celebrate a family birthday or go on a family outing, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Definition of Unauthorised Absence:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and the parent
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent
- Persistent lateness can constitute unauthorised absence
- If a student's attendance falls to an unacceptable level; absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical evidence can be provided to the school. Medical evidence can be in the form of appointment cards, doctors' letters, copies of prescriptions, etc.

Leave of Absence

- The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Expectations

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an authorised person).
- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.
- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days take either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence.

- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Leave of Absence taken in the academic year 2024-25

The law relating to Penalty Notices changed with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence taken from September 2024 will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- First Leave of Absence Offence: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE

We recognise the importance of good practice by:

- keeping and maintaining accurate attendance records. These will remain on file for a minimum of 3 years.
- recognising the links between attendance and achievement.
- rewarding students for outstanding or improved attendance on a regular basis.
- working closely with Warwickshire Attendance Service.

- ensuring all appropriate staff have had training and guidance related to the accurate completion of registers and attendance information.
- providing parents with information related to attendance in school documentation, e.g. school website, newsletters, prospectus, etc.
- regularly analysing attendance information and ensuring follow up action in the case of non-school attendance.
- reviewing the attendance policy with our Governing Body every two years or sooner, if necessary, with our Governing Body.

Levels of monitoring and stages of intervention:

Category	Level	Action	% Attendance	Weeks per year	Days per year	% chance of attaining 5 Grade 5-9/meeting ARE
100% attendance	Level 1	Celebrated publicly in assemblies Random Rewards Pride Points awarded for 100% weekly attendance	100	0 days	0 days missed	94.8
Excellent attendance	Level 2	Random Rewards Pride Points awarded for 100% weekly attendance	98 – 99.99	3 days	3 days missed	
Risk of underachieving	Level 3 (Stage 1 Intervention)	Text (and letter) home informing family that student attendance has fallen to 97	97 – 97.99	1 week	5 days missed	74.3
	Level 4 (Stage 2 Intervention)	Phone call home from Form Tutor or Home Welfare Link.	95 – 96.99	1.5 weeks	7.5 days missed	
Serious risk of underachieving	Level 5 (Stage 3 Intervention)	Second letter sent home Meeting with HOH to discuss attendance and support	93 – 94.99	2.5 weeks	12.5 days missed	60.4
Severe risk of underachieving	Level 6 (Stage 4 Intervention)	Serious risk letter sent home	90 – 92.99	3 weeks	15 days missed	34.7

		Meeting with Senior Attendance Champion to look at supporting attendance plan				
Extreme risk of underachieving	Level 7 (Stage 5 Intervention)	SLT attendance meeting. Support from Education Welfare Officer. Attendance plan put in place and reviewed 6 weekly	89.99 and below	3.5+ weeks	17.5+ days missed	26.7

Severe absence below 50%

Pupils classed as having a severe absence are to be invited in with a bespoke plan and targets to be agreed with the pupil, parents and support from the local LA, where appropriate, to achieve a more frequent attendance.

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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school

	regulated employment abroad	
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · In police detention · Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or · Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence

U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays