



## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Date of Policy: September 2023

Date of next review: September 2024

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)

## **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, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022

## **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 100% attendance for all of our students.

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:

- encourage and reward full time attendance and punctuality
- ensure that all our students enjoy attending school and are highly motivated to attend regularly and punctually
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that students are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- support and encourage all of our students to reach their full academic potential and achieve a high level of personal and social well-being
- maintain a consistent whole school approach to attendance
- ensure a safe and positive learning environment for all students
- record and monitor attendance and review this regularly to minimise and improve absenteeism and unauthorised absence.
- promote full time attendance by all those associated with the school, including students, parents, staff and governors. (Including an Attendance Link Governor).
- maintain and promote positive links between school and home
- 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.

## 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 9.30am 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.

## SCHOOL PROCEDURES

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

### **Lateness:**

- Registers open at 8.45am and close 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 8.45am but before 10.30am will be recorded as late
- Any student arriving after 10.30am 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:

- a. telephone calls to all known contacts
- b. letters home
- c. contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- d. possible home visits where safe to do so
- e. enquiries to friends, neighbours etc through school contacts
- f. enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the child/family
- g. 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.

## Requests for leaves of absence:

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Headteachers **shall not grant any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Headteacher or designated person must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The Headteacher or designated person 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 in advance and failure to do so may 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 a Fixed Penalty Notice if the child is absent from school during that period.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and 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.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

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

	(Stage 4 Intervention)	Meeting with Education Welfare Officer			missed	
<b>Extreme risk of underachieving</b>	<b>Level 7</b> (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.

## REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually.

## Appendix 1: Attendance codes used:

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

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

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Counts towards attendance</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>			
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances.	NO
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Student had been excluded but no alternative provision has been made.	NO
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances.	NO
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness.	NO
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment.	NO
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance.	NO



<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations.	NO
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school.	NO
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>			
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school.	NO
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student 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).	NO
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence.	NO
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at the school after the register closed.	NO

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Counts towards attendance</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school ages is not required to attend.	N/A
<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 student is in custody.	N/A
<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school.	N/A
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day.	N/A