

MET Pupil Attendance Policy

March 2022

Document Type	Trust wide non-statutory policy -Published online for information
Last Revision Date	March 2022
Next Revision Date	March 2024
Owner	HEADTEACHER GROUP
Author	Governance and Process Manager
Version	1.0
Status	Approved by Curriculum and Behaviour Scrutiny Panel

This policy applies to the following schools

Ab Kettleby Primary School
Brownlow Primary School
Sherard Primary School
Somerby Primary School
The Grove Primary School
John Ferneley College

Contents

This policy applies to the following schools	2
1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance.....	2
3. Roles and responsibilities.....	3
4. Recording attendance.....	3
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence.....	5
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	7
7. Attendance monitoring.....	7
8. Monitoring arrangements.....	8
9. Links with other policies.....	8
Appendix 1: attendance codes	9
Appendix 2: Registration times.....	11

1. Aims

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

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

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.

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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Trust Board

The Trust Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for each school in the Trust on at least a termly basis. The Quality of Education committee receive this information on behalf of the Trust Board at their meetings. The Quality of Education Committee also holds the headteacher at each setting to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Quality of Education Committee
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The attendance officer or school admin team

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

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

3.5 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

Each school will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. The attendance register is completed 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 reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Each school will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The timings of each school day is set out in appendix 2

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by the time set out in appendix 2 or as soon as practically possible to confirm why their child is not in attendance that day. (see also section 7). Parents/carers should notify the school by phone or email to the school office.

If the school is not notified in the set time parents/carers will be contacted by phone, text or email to determine the reason for absence.

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.

The attendance of pupils is monitored by school administration teams or attendance teams dependent on the Trust setting. If the child continues to remain absent without explanation the school will escalate the concern to the headteacher/pastoral lead or attendance manager who will continue to contact parents/carers. The school teams will endeavour to support the child and family to resolve the situation and reintegrate the child into school. Schools will perform home visits if they are unable to ascertain the reason behind non-attendance and will offer support from external agencies where appropriate to prevent the child becoming Missing in Education.

Attendance is monitored on a daily basis by administration and attendance staff, classroom teachers and tutors at each school for pupil welfare with a summary position being reviewed at least every half term.

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.

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.

Parents/carers are asked to complete a request form or email the school with requests for absence. These are reviewed by the Headteacher or Head of School and a decision made whether to authorise or not. This decision will be communicated with parents via email.

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. Each

request for absence will be considered on its own merits and decision are made at the discretion of the Headteacher or Head of School.

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

Pupils punctuality is monitored by administration and attendance staff, classroom teachers and tutors at each school. If punctuality becomes a concern this will be escalated to the headteachers and head of school at Primary and to the Heads of years at secondary. Communication with parents and pupils to establish good routines and monitoring will be initiated.

Parents will be given the opportunity to meet with school staff to discuss any issues and school will offer support where appropriate.

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, as explained in section 4.2.
- 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

In Primary settings – attendance is recorded and shared with parents in the pupils end of year report. Some schools promote their attendance on the school website celebrating those classes who have attended well.

In Secondary settings – Parents can track their child's attendance though School Gateway.

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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' if the benefit of the leave would outweigh the loss of teaching time and/or the leave would be for a one-off, never-to-be-repeated experience.

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:

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional;

- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states “on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs”;
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional; Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there WILL be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.
- 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

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the above, the Headteacher consult with the senior leadership team of the school prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

Evidence would be required in each case.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

Persistent absence is when a pupil enrolment's overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions.

Persistent absence is a serious problem for pupils. Much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving these pupils at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. There is also clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement:

- Of pupils who miss more than 50 per cent of school, only three per cent manage to achieve five A* to Cs including English and maths.
- Of pupils who miss between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of school, only 35 per cent manage to achieve five A* to C GCSEs including English and maths.
- Of pupils who miss less than five per cent of school, 73 per cent achieve five A* to Cs including English and maths.

Source - Department for Education

Even though there are thresholds for persistent absence schools will be aware of concerns with attendance and punctuality through the monitoring of pupil attendance generally and restorative work will in most cases be underway. However, once the persistent absence threshold is reached Headteachers and pastoral staff at Primary and the attendance team at Secondary will continue to communicate with parents/carers, offer meetings and support internally and externally as appropriate, continue to closely monitor and if useful set attendance targets. Where schools have supported pupils and their families regarding attendance at school they will maintain a chronology of all contact (successful and attempted) regarding pupil absence, with the pupil, parent(s) and other agencies.

Where staff members accompany external agencies into the community to retrieve absent pupils or perform safe and well checks on absent pupils the appropriate safeguarding measures and risk assessments are completed to ensure safety.

5.3 Legal sanctions

Your legal responsibility as a parent or carer is to ensure that your children of school age receive a suitable full-time education. Further information can be found on the Leicestershire county council website.

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-attendance>

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.

Headteachers can, once they have exhausted the Trust wide procedures stated in this policy consider at their discretion referring any unauthorised absence to the Pupil Services Court Team at Leicestershire County Council.

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

The Department for Education expect schools and local authorities to:

- a. Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- b. Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- c. act early to address patterns of absence.

Mowbray Education Trust agree to inform families of the school year and holiday times with as much notice as possible to help them plan their holidays and appointments out of school time.

Pupils will be encouraged to attend school and celebrate their learning and achievements.

Learning will be made accessible to all and reasonable adjustments made where appropriate.

Families will be supported in understanding the value of education and the detriment of absence to the educational opportunities of pupils.

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently across all the settings in the Trust.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school administration teams or attendance teams at our schools will monitor pupil absence on a daily basis.

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).

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

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 with the national average and share this with the Trust Board.

Attendance data is stored in our schools information system, this information is collated and used internally to monitor trends and impact. It can help schools

- 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 biannually by the MET Headteacher Group. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Curriculum and Behaviour Scrutiny Panel.

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
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: registration times

School	Ab Kettleby	Somerby	The Grove	Sherard	Brownlow	John Fernley College
Pupils must arrive in school by	8.55am	8.45am	8.40am	8.55am Special Provision 9.00am	8.50am	8.40am
The register for the first session will be taken at	9.00am	8.50am	8.55am/1pm	9.05am	8.55am PM - KS1 1pm/KS2 1.15pm	8.45am PM - 12.25pm
The register will be kept open until	9.05am	8.55am	9.05am/1.05pm	9.10am	9.10am PM – KS11.15pm/KS2 1.30pm	8.55am PM - 12.35pm
The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by	8.55am	8.45am	8.30am	8.40am	9.00am	8.00am

Appendix 3: personnel responsible for the monitoring of attendance

	Daily monitoring	Unexplained/unauthorised and persistent absence action	Holiday requests and fine decisions
Ab Kettleby	School Administration Team/Headteacher	School Administration Team/Headteacher	School Administration Team/Headteacher
Somerby	School Administration Team/Headteacher	School Administration Team/Headteacher	School Administration Team/Headteacher
The Grove	School Administration Team	Pastoral Lead and School Administration Team	Headteacher
Sherard	School Administration Team and Class Teachers	Pastoral Team and Administration Team	Headteacher
Brownlow	School Administration Team and Pastoral Manager	School Administration Team and Pastoral Manager	Headteacher
John Fernley College	Attendance Manager and Attendance Assistant	Attendance Manager and Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year	Attendance Manager and Headteacher

