



Penn Fields School Attendance, Registration and Punctuality Policy

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the **working together to improve school attendance** 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 (Student 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 governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher 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 governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Jackie Callaghan and can be contacted via 01902 558640

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Jackie Callaghan and can be contacted as point 3.3

3.5 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 by 9:15 am

3.6 School office staff

School Receptionist will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- If a parent/carer does not inform the school, admin staff (under the guidance of the Welfare Manager) will ring the parental home on the first day of absence or send a text message to ascertain why the child is absent.
- When there are an unprecedented number of student absences due to extreme weather conditions the headteacher, deputy headteacher or welfare manager will direct the Central Services Team to collectively conduct first day absence calls. Progress updates on calls made will be requested by the headteacher, deputy headteacher or welfare manager no later than 11:00. If significant progress has not been made, additional staffing will be allocated to contacting parents/carers.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:30am on the day of the absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students 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 student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent (and reason for absence if known)
- 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.

We will also record:

- For students at compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

Students must arrive in school by on each school day.

School opens to students at 8.30am. The student entrance gate is locked at 8.50am. School finishes at 2:30pm for lower school students and 3.05 pm for secondary aged students.

Students arriving after 9.00am must enter the school via the main entrance at the front of the building where they will be met by the Admin Staff. They will record the student's name, time of arrival and reason for lateness.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school's receptionist staff (see also section 7). If a child is absent from school the parent/carer should contact the school on 01902 558640 or a text a message can be sent to the school telephone number.

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 student'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 student's parent/carer notifies the school's receptionist/admin staff on 01902 558640 in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student'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 student 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
- Please see appendix 1 for how we follow up on students who are persistently late for school.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, and the absence is unusual or creates extreme concerns, we may contact the police
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the independent education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels by sending out a copy of their child's registration certificate every term. If there are concerns around a student's regular attendance, then copies of registration certificates along with a letter from the school's attendance officer will be sent home on a more regular basis.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via [Education and schools | City Of Wolverhampton Council](#). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision

5.2 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 student 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

- At the end of every term, every child achieving 100% attendance receives a certificate and their name read out in assembly. The children also receive an additional activity/reward.
- Attendance monitoring is undertaken and recorded within My Concern. The Local Authority requires the school to monitor attendance and have regular contact with the EWO to enable school to remain on target for our end of year percentage.
- Certificates and awards are awarded for children achieving 100% attendance for the academic year.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The attendance officer:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student-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.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The attendance Officer will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Involve the school's Independent Education Welfare Officer to support parents improve attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of bi-annually by the Welfare manager. 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
- Children Missing Education

Approved by Governors: November 2022

Review date: September 2023

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|------|--------------|---|
| / | Present (am) | Student is present at morning registration |
| \ | Present (pm) | Student is present at afternoon registration |
| L | Late arrival | Student arrives late before register has closed |

| | | |
|----------|-------------------------------|---|
| B | Off-site educational activity | Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school |
| D | Dual registered | Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| J | Interview | Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| P | Sporting activity | Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| V | Educational trip or visit | Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school |
| W | Work experience | Student is on a work experience placement |

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Authorised absence | | |
| C | Authorised leave of absence | Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E | Excluded | Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made |
| H | Authorised holiday | Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances |
| I | Illness | School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Student is at a medical or dental appointment |

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

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|-------------|---|--|
| X | Not required to be in school | Student at 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 student is in custody |

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Z | Student not on admission register | Register set up but student has not yet joined the school |
| # | Planned school closure | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |

Appendix 2 Flow Chart

Action to be Taken when there are unprecedented number of student absences

No parent/carer notification of absence by 09:30



School Receptionist begins phone calls to parents/carers to check why absent



Headteacher/deputy headteacher/welfare manager (SLT) checks progress at 11am



If Limited progress has been made (less than 3/4 of all students) then all of the Central Services Staff (a further three staff) will support and make calls home

