



Alsager School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Prepared by Mr R Pearce
Assistant Headteacher
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Presented for approval
at the Resources Committee Meeting
on 23/10/2024
and subsequently approved and adopted on the same date.

Chair of Resources Committee:
Mr D Edwards

Signature

Date: 23/10/2024

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that promotes excellent attendance and punctuality, including:

- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and ensure that all staff in the school recognise that good attendance is everyone's responsibility
- To promote full attendance to school and ensure that all stakeholders recognise the benefits of high attendance on pupil welfare and success including outcomes in external examinations
- To reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- To ensure pupils arrive punctually to school and sessions during the day
- To reward pupils and celebrate the success of pupils who achieve good, excellent or improved attendance/punctuality
- To regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence to identify pupils and cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place
- To recognise that some groups of pupils face more barriers to attending regularly (including pupils with long term physical/mental health conditions or those with SEND) and provide appropriate support for them to attend regularly
- To ensure that the school recognises the safeguarding risks associated with pupils who regularly go missing from Education and intervene appropriately
- To act early and challenge pupil attendance where it falls ensuring appropriate levels of support and intervention are maintained
- To engage with parents, pupils and where required, external agencies to positively impact where attendance is a serious cause for concern and falls below 90%
- To support parents and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly
- To ensure that every pupil has access to the full-time education they are entitled to
- To build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- To ensure the school works collaboratively with other establishments and agencies to report on, intervene with and improve pupil attendance

We will also promote and support excellent punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff regardless of their role should recognise that pupil attendance is everyone's responsibility and that in order for pupils to attend regularly, they need to feel happy, safe, challenged and inspired by attending Alsager School.

Those staff with additional responsibilities are:

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and Local Authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and specific groups of pupils who face additional barriers to attending including those with long term physical/mental illness and SEND and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher – Andrea O'Neill

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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 pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the designated senior leader responsible for attendance to be able to do so
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance – Rob Pearce (r.pearce@alsagerschool.org)

The Designated Senior Leader for attendance (also known as 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 an 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

3.4 The Attendance Manager – Kate Greenwood (absence@alsagerschool.org)

The school Attendance Manager 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, key pastoral staff and the Headteacher
- Working with the Local Authority 'Attendance and Children out of School Team' and other key staff such as the Family Liaison Officer and the Education Family Support Worker to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher/the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Take calls/messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system passing on information where appropriate to pastoral staff
- Chair meetings with the Heads of College, the SENDCO and the Post 16 Pastoral Administrator to discuss trends and decide on interventions to improve attendance for groups of individuals with poor attendance
- Work alongside pastoral staff to meet with pupils and/or parents to deliver targeted intervention and support to overcome barriers to good attendance
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents and children to discuss attendance issues including attending home visits when required
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Issue letters to parents and prepare attendance contracts
- Work with the Local Authority and other schools to advise the Assistant Headteacher responsible for maintaining the School Admission Register when pupils should be taken off the school roll for reasons such as in year transfers or Elective Home Education
- Lead the Attendance Administrator on day-to-day tasks to ensure the efficient running of attendance recording and tracking systems
- In partnership with the Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance, lead the Education Family Support worker, monitoring her case load and ensuring effective intervention is in place and ensuring record keeping is maintained

3.5 The Attendance Administrator – Penny Cowen (absence@alsagerschool.org)

The Attendance Administrator is responsible for:

- Take calls/messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system passing on information where appropriate to pastoral staff
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Assist the Attendance Manager to ensure daily attendance administration tasks are completed efficiently and complete visual checks/searches for pupils where necessary
- Contact parents to discuss attendance issues

3.6 Assistant Headteacher – Steve Rubin (s.rubin@alsagerschool.org)

The Assistant Headteacher responsible for data management is responsible for:

- Maintaining the School Admission Register (School Roll) in accordance with School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Ensuring that pupils are added to the School Roll on their first/expected day of attendance
- Removing pupils from the School Roll in accordance with reasons set out in regulation 9 of School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and notify relevant authorities
- Ensuring compliance with National and Local Authority returns on daily attendance figures
- Include attendance information on school reports/progress updates sent to parents

3.7 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads (Heads of College) (safeguarding@alsagerschool.org)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs/DSL) are responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff recognise that children who do not attend school regularly or go missing from education are particularly vulnerable and at increased risk of neglect, exploitation and abuse
- Ensuring that attendance and welfare of pupils with a Social Worker is carefully monitored as a group that face additional barriers to attending
- Ensure that Social Workers/Foster Carers and Youth Offending Teams are regularly kept informed of pupil absence and any concerns over their attendance, especially absences that are unexplained
- Ensure that Social Workers and other lead practitioners are involved in meetings to intervene with poor attendance
- The DDSLs will promote high levels of attendance within their School/Sixth Form
- Work alongside the Attendance Manager, the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance and their Senior Leadership links to discuss trends, patterns and agree on interventions and support required to improve attendance and record interventions on the appropriate school system
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents and children to discuss attendance issues including attending home visits when required
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Attend Local Authority attendance meetings as a representative of the pupils in their College

In collaboration with the school SEND team, DDSLs are responsible for:

- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the Local Authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

3.8 Family Liaison Officer and Education Family Support Worker

The Family Liaison Officer and the Education Family Support Worker are responsible for working collaboratively with the school and families via Targeted Support meetings to support/advise on specific cases

and agree approaches to improve the attendance of severely and persistently absent pupils. Close collaboration is also required with partners such as the Local Authority Children's Social Care Team and the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team

3.9 Form Tutors

Form Tutors are responsible for accurately recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes on Talaxy at the start of each morning session. Form Tutors are also responsible for:

- Promoting good attendance from all pupils in their form group
- Monitoring attendance of tutees on a daily basis and querying any unexplained absences
- Intervening with pupils and parents following receipt of fortnightly reports of pupil attendance, liaising with the Attendance Manager and/or Head of College as appropriate to follow up concerns and offer support

3.10 Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for each lesson they teach and submitting this information via Talaxy using the correct code within the first 5 minutes of each lesson. Class Teachers should contact the Attendance Manager should a pupil not be present in their lesson who has been marked as present in a previous lesson that day. They should send an email to attendance@alsagerschool.org with the subject line 'Missing Pupil', stating the name of the pupil and classroom they teach in.

3.11 School Admin/Office Staff

School Admin/Office staff will:

- Sign-in and sign-out using the correct code on Talaxy any pupils who arrive or leave via the front reception throughout the school day
- Transfer calls/messages from parents to the Attendance Team or Heads of College in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.12 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or Local Authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or email the school absence line to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence or as soon as possible and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return **Absence line: 01270 871107 or absence@alsagerschool.org**
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Talk to their child about the importance of school and education
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress and instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Support the school; take every opportunity to become involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Refrain from taking their children on holiday during term-time
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or Local Authority
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance

- Work collaboratively and be proactive, seeking support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting:

The Attendance Manager – Kate Greenwood – absence@alsagerschool.org

DDSL/Heads of College:

Dod – n.salt@alsagerschool.org (effective 11/11/2024)

Lovell – c.richardson@alsagerschool.org

Moreton – j.broad@alsagerschool.org

Royce – v.monaghan@alsagerschool.org

6th Form – s.james@alsagerschool.org

The Designated Senior Leader for attendance – r.pearce@alsagerschool.org

3.13 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time and attend every timetabled lesson on time
- School gates are open from 8.00am and are expected to be present on the school site no later than 8.38am in order to be at their classroom by 8.40am, ready to learn
- Work collaboratively with school staff to overcome any barriers which may be impacting their attendance

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

The school will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day. All teachers will complete this during the first 5 minutes of each session.

We will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present (including late)
- Attending a place other than the school
- Absent
- Leave of absence
- 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 pupils of compulsory school age) Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

All pupils in Years 7-11 are required to attend the School Monday – Friday from 8.40am to 15.10pm.

Students in the Sixth Form are required to attend Monday – Friday for every timetabled session. Further

details about Sixth Form attendance can be found here: <https://www.alsagerschool.org/alsager-6th-form/parents-2/attendance-and-punctuality/>

Pupils should arrive in school before 8.38am each morning. The session start promptly at 8.40am and pupils are expected to be in their lesson equipped for learning at this time.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.10am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 13.10pm by the Class Teacher and will be kept open until 13.40pm.

Pupils are registered in every lesson and their BfL (Behaviour for Learning) grade will be recorded. Punctuality to lessons will also be recorded and monitored. Any pupil who is missing from a lesson who has been present in a previous lesson will be identified by the Class Teacher and a message sent to the Attendance Manager to investigate.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling or emailing the school **Absence line: 01270 871107** or absence@alsagerschool.org

Notification of absence from a parent/carer will not automatically authorise the absence.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, however if the school is not satisfied with the reason for any absence, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, and parents will be informed.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 has not received notification of a pupil absence, the Attendance Manager/Administrator will contact parents on the morning of the first day of absence to ascertain the reason for absence, ensuring proper safeguarding actions are taken.

The Attendance Manager/Administrator will update the register, note the reason for absence and if appropriate inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy of any unusual or extended absences.

On the second day of absence, if no communication is received from parents, a home visit will be made by the Attendance Manager or member of pastoral team. However, depending on the circumstances, a home visit may take place at any point from the first day of absence and irrespective of any communication from home.

If a pupil has persistent absence due to illness, the school may request that medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence is provided for any absences before authorising the absence.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school time. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, the Attendance Manager should be informed in advance via the **Absence line: 01270 871107** or absence@alsagerschool.org

A "present" mark can only be awarded for the morning session if a child is in attendance between 8.40am and 9.10am. It is imperative that pupils do not miss this slot of 8.40am-9.10am. The register for the afternoon session takes place between 13.10pm and 13.40pm and pupils can only be marked present for the afternoon session if they attend at that time. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day. We always expect pupils to attend school before and after appointments and should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of unavoidable 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 Unauthorised Absences

Absences will be unauthorised if:

- The parent/carer has not contacted the school with a valid reason for the absence
- The school has not received the requested medical note regarding illness
- A pupil has truanted
- The school does not consider the parent/carer's reason for absence to be valid

4.5 Leaving the School

During the school day pupils must not leave the school premises without permission. Pupils are only allowed to leave the school during the day under the following circumstances:

- Year 10 and 11 pupils with permission from their parents/carers may leave during their lunch break
- Year 10 and 11 pupils leaving site during lunch must sign in/out electronically with their pupil ID card at the stations located by the rear school gates
- The privilege of being able to leave site during lunch for year 10 and 11 pupils may be removed at any point by school staff, especially for reasons of poor behaviour or school punctuality/attendance
- Sixth Form students may leave during their lunch break and must sign in/out electronically with their pupil ID card at the stations located by the rear school gates or in the sixth form area. Other details of when a Sixth Form student may leave site are cited here: <https://www.alsagerschool.org/alsager-6th-form/parents-2/attendance-and-punctuality/>
- All other pupils can only leave the school if prior permission is received from parent/carer. On leaving the premises the pupil should sign out through main reception and on their return via main reception at the front of school where they will be signed out/in electronically.

4.6 Lateness and Punctuality

The school gates (Church Road, Long Drive and D&T) close at 8.38am. Pupils are expected to be in school by this time in order to be at their lesson and ready to learn by 8.40am.

Pupils arriving at the school site after 8:38 should use the front of school to gain access as the school gates close at 8.38am. Pupils arriving late must enter via main school reception giving a reason for their lateness which will be recorded by the Attendance Manager.

Lateness of less than 30 minutes (pupils arriving before the register closes) will be recorded as an L on the register and the number of minutes late to the session recorded. A text message will be sent to parents informing them that their child was late to school.

Pupils who arrive late will be asked to report to their Head of College that day at morning break to discuss the reason for this. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 will also have their lunch pass removed for that day. Heads of College will return this pass at break time the following day should they be on time.

At form time the Form Tutor will also follow up lateness and absences with individual pupils, reporting any patterns or concerns to the Attendance Manager and/or the pupil's Head of College.

Lateness of more than 30 minutes (pupils arriving after the register has closed) will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a U code will be entered onto the electronic system. U codes will be followed up with contact to parents to establish a reason as with any unauthorised absence.

Lateness to lessons within the school day and pupils who are persistently late will be addressed in accordance with the school behaviour policy.

4.7 Following up Unexplained Absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make a home visit or in some circumstances, where a child is particularly vulnerable contact the Police or Cheshire East Children's Services for assistance to locate the child
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving other professionals or services as appropriate
- 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 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's Youth Offending Team Officer/Social Worker or Family Support Worker
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance including offering to meet with the parents or visit the child at home
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: [issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate]

4.8 Reporting to Parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will happen via twice yearly reports which are sent out by email. Parents are also able to check their child's attendance daily via our parent portal. Pupils whose attendance is of concern will receive further correspondence during the year informing them of their child's attendance.

5. Leave of Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

Being absent from the school for any reason can deprive a child of educational opportunities and hamper his/her progress. Children have a right to an education and denying children their rights can have a long-lasting effect on ensuring they meet their true potential. There is a strong correlation between good attendance and academic achievement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and the accompanying guidance make it clear that Parents/Carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of school for holidays in term time.

There are 190 statutory school days a year, leaving 175 other days available for holidays that would not have a negative effect on a child's education. Taking a child on holiday in term time may imply that school is not important.

Leave of absence requests for the following reasons **are not** considered to be **special or exceptional**:

- Availability of cheaper holidays
- Poor weather experienced in holiday periods
- Holidays overlapping with beginning or end of term
- Term time not matching a sibling at another school
- Visiting relatives

This list is not exhaustive

Leave of absence may be granted in **special or exceptional** circumstances only at the Headteacher's discretion.

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Any request should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks in advance of the proposed absence. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

For all requests for authorised absence, the school will need to consider:

- How long it is for and how much it will disrupt the child's education
- The overall attendance record of the child
- The nature of the circumstances, such as trauma or death within the immediate family
- Previous similar requests

The school will not, as a rule, grant leave:

- If a child's attendance record is less than 97%
- If the period coincides with the start of term, or is near to, or coincides with public examinations or other significant events on the school calendar
- If there are patterns of non-attendance or if there is the involvement of the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team
- If the school has concerns over a child's welfare and safety

The school will:

- Ensure our Attendance Policy is regularly communicated to parents/carers and is available on the school website
- Remind parents/carers of the importance of ensuring their child's regular, uninterrupted school attendance and the potential consequences for failing to do so
- Actively discourage parents/carers from arranging holidays in term time, reminding parents/carers that they **do not** have the right or entitlement to expect leave to be granted in term time
- Work in partnership with the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team to report unauthorised leave of absence which may lead to legal sanctions being taken against the parent/carer

Children may be reported as 'missing' to the relevant agencies if they fail to return to school by an agreed date, whether the absence has been authorised or not by the Headteacher.

Parent/Carers should:

- Make requests in writing to the Headteacher at least 4 weeks in advance of the anticipated leave
- Consider very carefully the implications of taking a child out of school in term time and the impact on

the child's learning

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the Local Authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

5.2.1 Penalty Notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), Local Authority or the Police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the Local Authority before doing so and send a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80.00 within 21 days, or £160.00 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160.00 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60.00 within 21 days, or £120.00.

5.2.2 Notices to Improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the Local Code of Conduct for the Local Authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The school is committed to all pupils achieving excellent levels of attendance. The school regularly remind both pupils and parents through various means about the importance of excellent attendance.

Fortnightly attendance monitoring data is sent to Form Tutors.

We display a range of promotional posters and announcements in briefings and assemblies.

We celebrate pupils termly who achieve 100%-98% attendance by awarding an 'Attendance Star' as it is testimony to their dedication and to the families who support them.

We also celebrate 100% attendance each month through a certificate awarded by a pupil's Head of College which is sent home via email. This gives everyone a chance to be regularly recognised for their achievement.

Text messages to parents are also sent halfway through the month with the aim of encouraging 100% attendance for that month.

In each year group, form classes compete each half term for the best attendance. Their performance feeds into the overall College Cup. This is celebrated and information is displayed around the school.

7. Attendance Monitoring

The school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data frequently through a range of measures

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will monitor, at regular intervals, attendance and absence data across the school, year groups and at an individual pupil level:

- Weekly - in meetings between Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Manager
- Fortnightly – in meetings between the Assistant Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team
- Fortnightly – in meetings between Attendance Manager and Heads of College
- Fortnightly – in reports to Form tutors
- Fortnightly – in meetings between the Heads of College and their Senior Leadership links
- Termly – in reports to the Governing Board
- Termly - in meetings with the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team
- Yearly – to inform Self Evaluation and school Improvement planning

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- 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:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide fortnightly reports to Form Tutors, Heads of College and the Senior Leadership Team to facilitate discussions with pupils and families. This includes the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Designated Safeguarding Leads and Pupil Premium Lead
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, Local Authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the Local Authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Send out letters and use attendance contracts with parents and pupils whose attendance is of concern
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)
- Engage with and discuss individual cases with the Educational Family Support Worker and the Family Liaison Officer

7.5 Attendance Contracts

An Attendance Contract will be issued when there are ongoing serious concerns over a pupil's attendance. This may be initiated and monitored by the school or by the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team. Parents and the pupil will be invited into school for a meeting with the Head of College and the Attendance Manager or the Education Family Support Worker to discuss what measures can be done to improve attendance. Circumstances where an attendance contract may be issued include:

- Where attendance has fallen below 90%
- Where attendance is falling and there have been historical concerns about attendance
- Where initial attempts to improve attendance by the school have failed

At the initial contract meeting, a supportive discussion will take place with specific targets and interventions set. The contract will then be reviewed approximately every 4-5 weeks (or sooner if necessary) to update any targets or intervention and evaluate any impact on attendance.

If there is no significant improvement, then the school will escalate further.

Other interventions that the school may employ are:

- Local Authority panel meetings for attendance
- Home visits by the Attendance Manager or other members of staff
- Referral to the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team
- Issue of fixed penalty notices and court proceedings.

8. Specific Groups of Pupils

8.1 Pupils with long term absence as a result of physical/mental illness

The school will seek to provide support for pupils during their absence and after their return to school. The school will seek to work collaboratively with families to expedite a successful return to full-time education at the school. This could take the form of:

- Home visits during the period of illness to maintain contact and conduct welfare checks
- An agreed plan to return to the school (when medically able to) with reasonable adjustments in place (e.g. temporary part-time timetable, use of student work room, curriculum adjustments)

The school is required to inform the Local Authority if a pupil is absent through illness for 15 days (consecutive or not) over the course of an academic year.

8.2 Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may face additional barriers to attending regularly at school. The school will work in partnership with parents and pupils to establish strategies to remove in-school barriers to attendance.

This could take the form of:

- Working in partnership with school transport providers
- Reasonable adjustments for school uniform and routines
- Access to extra support in areas such as TLC and the student work room

The school will ensure that the provision outlined in the pupil's Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) (where applicable) is accessed.

8.3 Disadvantaged Pupils

The school recognises that disadvantaged pupils (including those eligible for pupil premium) may face additional barriers to attending regularly at school. The school will ensure that the funding allocated for Pupil Premium will be allocated on interventions that will promote high attendance from disadvantaged pupils. The school reports annually on how the funding is spent in its Pupil Premium Strategy review statement which is published on the website. The school will work in partnership with parents and pupils to establish strategies to remove in-school barriers to attendance.

This could take the form of:

- Support with funding transport passes
- Support with funding uniform
- Discretionary support with accessing visits and enrichment activities

8.4 Children Missing from Education

The school understands that knowing where children are during school-time hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Children missing from education, particularly persistently, is a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation. The school response to children missing from education supports identifying such abuse and also helps prevent the risk of them going missing in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to Local Authority Children's Social Care and need a Social Worker (such as on a Children in Need or Child Protection Plan, or as a looked after child) where going missing from education may increase safeguarding risks within the family or community.

The school will:

- Monitor attendance carefully of pupils at risk of CME and address poor or irregular attendance without delay
- Prioritise intervention including 1st day home visits where necessary
- Follow the procedures set out by the Local Authority to promptly report any child missing from education <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/schools/cme-policy.pdf>

8.5 Elective Home Education (EHE)

The school respects the right of a parent to remove their child from school to Electively Home Educate if that is in the best interests of the child. However, the school recognises that home education can mean some

children are less visible to the services that are there to keep them safe and not supported in line with their needs. Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating them at home the school will (wherever possible in advance of any final decision being made):

- Contact the parent and pass on details of the EHE Team at the Local Authority
- Contact the EHE Team at the Local Authority to inform them in advance

Ensuring that EHE is in the best interests of the child is particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable and/or has a Social Worker. Where a child has an Education and Health care plan (EHCP) the Local Authority should review the plan with parents/carers.

At the point where a child is taken off roll following written confirmation from parents that they wish to remove their child to EHE, we will inform the Local Authority of the deletion from our admission register.

9. Temporary Transition Timetables

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a pupil's best interest, the school may use a temporary transition timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. An example of where temporary transition timetable might be used is where a pupil has had a long-term absence (e.g. due to physical/mental illness) and it is agreed for them to have a phased return to school.

A transition timetable should be in place for the shortest time necessary and not treated as a long-term solution and should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

The pupil, parents and all professionals must agree with the timetable offered which is signed by the parents. Arrangements should be made for regular reviews (4-6 weeks) and must be with the pupil, parents and other professionals involved.

The school will record when the child is not in school through the agreement as an authorised absence.

Any agreed transition timetable will be reported to the Local Authority via the appropriate form located here: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/school-attendance/part-time-timetables.aspx>

The school also recognises that when children are not in school, such as when a learner is on a reduced timetable, suspended or excluded, they miss the protection and opportunities that education can provide and can become more vulnerable to harm. Learners who have a Social Worker, including looked after children and previously looked after children are especially vulnerable. The school proactively supports learners in the school environment and decision-making processes about reduced timetables, suspension or exclusion operate in the best interests of children as outlined in local and national guidance.

Any part-time timetable will:

- Be agreed in advance between the school and parent/carer and have a clear rationale
- Be explicit about when the pupil is expected in school and what provision is made for the time that they are not in school during the normal school day – in line with safeguarding protocols
- Have a scheduled review with a named member of staff
- Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the pupil

10. Monitoring Arrangements

This Policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3 years by The Designated Senior Leader responsible for Attendance. At every review, the policy will be presented to Governors for their approval.

11. 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
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 regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
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)

Code	Definition	Scenario
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <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