



Alsager School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Prepared by Mr R Pearce
Assistant Headteacher
September 2026

Presented for approval
at the Full Governing Body Committee Meeting
on 30/09/2026
and subsequently approved and adopted on the same date.
Updated post meeting on 06/10/2026

Joint Chair of Governors:
Mrs A Weaver and Mr R Fisher

Signature
Mr R Fisher

Date: 30/09/2026

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 2026](#) through our whole-school culture and ethos that promotes excellent attendance and punctuality, including:

- Develop and maintain a whole-school culture where regular attendance is valued, expected and understood to be everyone's responsibility, with high expectations for every pupil.
- Promote the importance and benefits of regular school attendance for pupils' education, attainment, wellbeing, development, relationships, sense of belonging and safeguarding.
- Ensure that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled and is supported to attend school regularly.
- Identify attendance concerns and emerging patterns of absence at the earliest opportunity, using accurate attendance data to understand which pupils, groups and cohorts may require additional support.
- Understand and address the barriers to regular attendance, working with pupils and their families to identify appropriate, individualised and proportionate support.
- Recognise that some pupils and families may face greater barriers to regular attendance, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), physical or mental health needs, young carers or other individual or family circumstances, and ensure appropriate reasonable adjustments and support are considered where required.
- Provide a clear, graduated and support-first response to attendance concerns, with early intervention, targeted support and appropriate escalation where attendance does not improve, support is not engaged with or further intervention is required.
- Reduce overall absence and, in particular, persistent and severe absence, with a strong focus on preventing pupils from becoming persistently or severely absent wherever possible.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers, recognising their legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive suitable education and attend school regularly.
- Build strong, respectful and supportive relationships with families, communicating clearly about attendance expectations, listening to concerns and working collaboratively to improve attendance.
- Promote and support good punctuality, recognising the importance of pupils arriving on time for school.
- Recognise and celebrate positive attendance and punctuality, including improvements made by pupils who may have experienced barriers to regular attendance.
- Monitor, analyse and review attendance data regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies, identify areas of concern and inform targeted action at individual, group and whole-school level.
- Recognise the link between attendance and safeguarding, ensuring that patterns of absence, persistent or severe absence and repeated lateness are considered alongside wider information about a pupil's welfare and safety.
- Work collaboratively with the Local Authority and other agencies and services where appropriate, particularly where attendance concerns are complex, persistent or require support beyond the school's capacity.
- Take appropriate action where attendance does not improve despite support, including the use of statutory and legal interventions where appropriate and in accordance with national guidance and the Local Authority's procedures.
- Ensure that attendance practice is inclusive, consistent and proportionate, taking account of individual circumstances and avoiding approaches that create or increase barriers to attendance.

We will also promote and support excellent punctuality and attendance to lessons throughout the school day, recognising that every session missed can affect a pupil's learning, progress, wellbeing and sense of connection to school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance.

- [Working together to improve school attendance – DfE](#)

The guidance is supported by the following legislation, which sets out the legal powers and duties governing school attendance:

- [Education Act 1996](#)
- [Education Act 2002](#)
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also has regard to the following statutory guidance and DfE guidance:

- [Complete the school census – DfE](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2026 – DfE](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools – DfE](#)
- [Children missing education – DfE](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school – DfE](#)
- [Providing remote education: guidance for schools – DfE](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – DfE](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years – DfE](#)

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains consistent with changes to legislation, statutory guidance and Department for Education requirements and relevant Cheshire East Council procedures.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, regardless of their role should recognise that pupil attendance is everyone's responsibility. Good attendance is supported by a school environment in which pupils feel happy, safe, challenged, inspired and that they belong.

3.1 The Governing Board

- Recognise and promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Set high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including accurate attendance recording and required information sharing with the DfE and Local Authority.
- Ensure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensure 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

- Ensure high aspirations are maintained for all pupils while attendance processes and support are adapted to individual needs.
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data and support leaders to focus improvement efforts on individual pupils and cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate attendance training, including understanding the importance of attendance, the reasons behind absence, legal requirements for registers and the school's support and intervention procedures.
- Hold the Headteacher to account for implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headteacher – Andrea O'Neill

- Implement this policy across the school
- Monitor school-level absence data and report to the Governor Board
- Support staff in monitoring individual pupil attendance and evaluate the impact of attendance strategies.
- Authorise or delegate appropriate staff to request or issue penalty notices in accordance with national and Local Authority procedures.
- Communicate the school's high expectations for regular attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers

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

- Lead, champion and improve attendance across the school
- Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining regular attendance and punctuality
- Evaluate attendance expectations, processes and the effectiveness of support
- Oversee attendance data analysis, including priority cohorts and emerging patterns.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for identifying, following up and improving attendance, ensuring a support-first approach.
- Liaise with pupils, parents/carers, the Local Authority and external agencies where needed
- Build productive relationships with families to understand and address barriers to attendance
- Create attendance support, intervention and reintegration plans in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals.

3.4 The Attendance Manager – Sarah Dallal (absence@alsagerschool.org)

- Monitor and analyse attendance data and benchmark attendance to identify areas for improvement
- Provide regular attendance reports to staff and report concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance, pastoral staff and the Headteacher
- Work with the Local Authority Attendance and Children out of School Team and other key staff such as the Family Liaison Officer to support pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence
- Advise the Headteacher/Designated Senior Leader for Attendance when legal intervention, including a penalty notice, may be appropriate.
- 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, SEND staff and other relevant pastoral staff to review trends and agree support
- Work alongside pastoral staff to meet with pupils and/or parents to deliver targeted intervention and support to overcome barriers
- Arrange calls, meetings and home visits where appropriate with parents and pupils
- Create attendance support or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Issue attendance correspondence and, where appropriate, prepare attendance contracts

- Work with the Local Authority, other schools and families regarding admission-register matters and Elective Home Education.

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

- Maintain the School Admission Register (school roll) in accordance with School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Ensure pupils are added to the school roll on their first/expected day of attendance in accordance with the regulations
- Remove pupils from the school roll only where a reason set out in regulation 9 applies and notify relevant authorities as required
- Ensure compliance with National and Local Authority attendance returns
- Include attendance information on school reports/progress updates sent to parents/carers

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

- Ensure staff recognise that irregular or unexplained absence can be an important safeguarding indicator and that children who are missing education may be particularly vulnerable
- Ensure that attendance and welfare of pupils with a Social Worker and other vulnerable groups are carefully monitored
- 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 support with attendance
- Work alongside the Attendance Manager, the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance and their Senior Leadership links to understand attendance patterns and agree/provide support
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents and children to discuss attendance issues including attending home visits when required
- Attend Local Authority attendance meetings as a representative of the pupils in their College
- Work with the SEND team and families to develop attendance support for pupils with SEND and communicate with the Local Authority where appropriate, including for pupils with EHCPs.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns identified through attendance are addressed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

3.7 Family Liaison Officer

Work collaboratively with the school and families through Targeted Support meetings and other appropriate processes to understand barriers and agree approaches to improve attendance, particularly for severely and persistently absent pupils. This includes close collaboration with Children's Social Care and the Local Authority Attendance and Children Out of School Team.

3.8 Form Tutors

- Accurately record attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes on Talaxy at the start of each lesson.
- Promote regular attendance and punctuality within in their form group
- Monitor attendance of tutees' and querying any unexplained absences
- Use attendance information to have supportive conversations with pupils and, where appropriate, parents/carers.
- Liaise with the Attendance Manager and Head of College where patterns or concerns emerge.

3.9 Class Teachers

- Record attendance for every lesson they teach via Talaxy using the correct BfL code within the first 5 minutes of the lesson.
- 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.
- Promote regular attendance and punctuality within their classes

3.10 School Admin/Office Staff

- Sign-in and sign-out using the correct code on Talaxy pupils who arrive or leave via the front reception throughout the school day
- Transfer calls/messages from parents to the Attendance Lead or Heads of College where further support is required

3.11 Parents and carers

Where this policy refers to a parent/carer it refers to the adult the school and/or Local Authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including natural parents, those who have parental responsibility and anyone with day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Notify the school of 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 one 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 routines that support attendance, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Refrain from taking their children on holiday during term-time
- Engage with any attendance support or attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or Local Authority
- Seek support promptly where circumstances may affect their child's attendance

The Attendance Manager – Sarah Dallal – absence@alsagerschool.org

DDSL's/Heads of College:

Dod – n.salt@alsagerschool.org

Lovell – c.richardson@alsagerschool.org

Moreton – s.bamba@alsagerschool.org

Royce – v.monaghan@alsagerschool.org

6th Form – s.james@alsagerschool.org

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

3.12 Pupils

- Attend school every day they are able, on time and attend every timetabled lesson on time

- Arrive on site from 8.20am and no later than 8.38am so that they can be in their classroom and ready to learn by 8.40am.
- Work collaboratively with school staff to understand and overcome any barriers affecting attendance
- Speak to a trusted adult if there are worries or circumstances making attendance difficult

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

The school will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils on this register. The statutory register will be taken at the start of the first session each school day and once during the second session, at the same time for all registered pupils. The register will be kept open for no longer than 30 minutes.

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

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: [Sixth Form 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 morning statutory register will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.10am.

The afternoon statutory register will be taken at 1.10pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm.

Pupils are registered in every lesson throughout the day as part of the school's attendance and safeguarding procedures. Teachers will record a BfL (Behaviour for Learning) grade. Punctuality to lessons will 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/carers must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence by 8.30am on the first day of absence, 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/carers will not automatically authorise the absence. The school will consider the reason provided and use the appropriate national attendance code.

Absence due to illness, including physical or mental health needs, will normally be recorded using code I. The school will not routinely request medical evidence. Evidence may be requested only where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the reason for absence or clarification is needed to record the absence accurately. The school will be flexible about the form of evidence requested

If the school has not received notification of a pupil absence, the Attendance Manager 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 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.

Where a pupil has persistent or repeated illness-related absence, the school may request reasonable medical evidence where this is necessary to clarify the reason for absence or accurately record the register.

Where a pupil is likely to miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness, the school will notify the Local Authority in accordance with DfE guidance and local arrangements.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will normally be recorded using code M 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. 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 they 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. See section 5.

4.4 Unauthorised Absences

An absence will be recorded as unauthorised where none of the authorised absence or unavoidable-cause codes applies. This may include:

- Absence where the reason has not been established or the school is not satisfied that the reason provided meets the criteria for authorised absence.
- Absence for a holiday or leisure activity where leave has not been authorised.
- Truancy or other absence without an authorised reason.

A failure to provide medical evidence will not, by itself, result in an illness absence being recorded as unauthorised where the school has no genuine and reasonable doubt about the reason for absence.

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: [Sixth Form attendance and punctuality](#)
- All other pupils can only leave the school if prior permission is received from parent/carers. 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 8.38am should use the main school reception to gain access as the school gates close at 8.38am. Pupils should give 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 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:

- Contact 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 the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained and within the timescales required by regulations and DfE guidance.
- 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
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, further intervention may be considered in accordance with section 5

4.8 Reporting to Parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. 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

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education. Regular attendance is essential to learning, wellbeing, development and safeguarding. Parents/carers do not have a general right to take their child out of school during term time for a holiday or leisure activity.

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

Leave of absence during term time will only be granted where the circumstances meet the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The Headteacher will consider each request on its individual merits and will not operate a blanket policy that automatically grants or refuses leave.

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

The circumstances in which leave may be granted include:

Taking part in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (code C1).

Attending an interview (code J1).

Study leave for a public examination (code S).

A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable (code C2).

Exceptional circumstances (code C).

The Headteacher has discretion over whether leave is granted and, if granted, its length.

The DfE does not generally consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Requests should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher as soon as the need is known and, where possible, at least four weeks in advance.

The Headteacher may request evidence to support an application.

Relevant considerations may include the nature and exceptional circumstances of the request, the likely length and disruption to education, the pupil's attendance pattern, previous requests and relevant safeguarding or welfare information.

No minimum attendance percentage will be used as an automatic bar to leave of absence.

If leave is not authorised and the pupil is absent, the absence will normally be recorded as unauthorised and may contribute towards the national threshold for consideration of a penalty notice.

Unauthorised term-time holidays will be dealt with in accordance with Cheshire East Council's current Code of Conduct and national guidance.

A pupil who does not return from authorised leave on the agreed date will be followed up promptly and safeguarding/CME procedures will be considered where appropriate.

5.2 Legal Intervention

The school will prioritise a support-first approach. Where appropriate, support will be offered to understand and address barriers to attendance before legal intervention is considered. Where support is not appropriate, is unsuccessful or is not engaged with, the school may use the legal interventions available under national legislation and guidance, working with Cheshire East Council where required.

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.

- A penalty notice may be considered for unauthorised absence where the legal and national framework requirements are met.
- The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session.
- The threshold may be met through any combination of unauthorised absence, including holiday absence and lateness after the register has closed.
- Meeting the threshold does not automatically mean a penalty notice will be issued. Each case will be considered individually, including whether support is appropriate, whether it has been offered and engaged with, whether a penalty notice is the most appropriate tool, and relevant Equality Act 2010 and safeguarding considerations.
- Penalty notices will be administered in accordance with Cheshire East Council's current Code of Conduct.
- Current national penalty amounts:
- First penalty notice: £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days.
- Second penalty notice for the same parent in respect of the same pupil within three years of the first: £160 payable within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil within three years of the first; alternative legal action may be considered instead.
- Separate statutory arrangements apply to penalty notices relating to a pupil being present in a public place during the first five days of a suspension or exclusion.

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.

Any Notice to Improve will follow Cheshire East Council's current procedures and will set out the attendance concerns, support already offered, opportunities for further support, the required improvement and consequences of insufficient improvement.

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.

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.

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

We hold positive conversations with pupils and families about attendance data and missed learning.

We provide targeted support and intervention informed by individual attendance patterns and the reasons for absence.

We use attendance strategies that are inclusive and do not stigmatise pupils or families because of health, SEND, caring responsibilities or other barriers.

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 - meetings between Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Manager
- Fortnightly – meetings between the Assistant Headteacher and the Headteacher
- Fortnightly – meetings between Attendance Manager, the Assistant Headteacher, Heads of College and the SENCO/Deputy SENCO
- Fortnightly – meetings between the Heads of College and their Senior Leadership links
- Termly – reports to the Governing Board
- Termly - meetings with the Local Authority School Attendance and Children Out of Education Team
- Annually – to inform Self Evaluation and school Improvement planning
- Biannual meetings - with attendance link governor

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. The school also uses internal monitoring through the use of Power Bi.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

- 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 and monitor priority groups including pupils with SEND, long-term physical or mental health needs, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with social workers, looked-after and previously looked-after children, young carers and other vulnerable pupils
- 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

- 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
- Provide regular reports to 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 concerns 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
- Consider legal intervention where support is not appropriate, has not worked or has not been engaged with
- Engage with and discuss individual cases with 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 to discuss what more formal support could be used to improve attendance.

- An attendance contract may be considered where attendance concerns are ongoing and a more formal support arrangement is appropriate.
- It will not be used solely because a pupil has fallen below a particular attendance percentage.

- Where appropriate, a meeting will be arranged with the parent(s) and pupil. The meeting will explore barriers, agree actions, identify support and set review arrangements.
- Contracts will be tailored to the individual circumstances of the pupil and family. There is no prescribed minimum or maximum duration.
- If agreed support does not result in sufficient improvement, the school will review the case and consider further support or appropriate legal intervention.

8. Specific Groups of Pupils

8.1 Pupils with Long-Term Absence as a Result of Physical or Mental Health Needs

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.

- Maintain appropriate contact and welfare support during absence.
- Agree a plan for return to school, including reasonable adjustments where required.
- Use a temporary, time-limited part-time timetable only where exceptional, in the pupil's best interests and part of a plan to return to full-time education.
- Liaise with health professionals, the Local Authority and other services where appropriate.
- Notify the Local Authority where the school has reasonable grounds to believe a pupil of compulsory school age will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively due to sickness, in accordance with DfE and local procedures.

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 uniform where this is an identified barrier
- Discretionary support with accessing visits and enrichment activities
- Evaluate the impact of attendance interventions and reflect relevant activity in the Pupil Premium Strategy where appropriate.

8.4 Young Carers and Other Vulnerable Groups

The school recognises that young carers and other pupils facing additional barriers may experience challenges in attending regularly. Attendance data will be monitored for these pupils and support will focus on understanding and addressing the circumstances affecting attendance.

- Consider the impact of caring responsibilities, social circumstances, safeguarding needs and other vulnerabilities.
- Consider appropriate adjustments, pastoral support, early help and multi-agency support.
- Avoid stigmatising pupils and ensure attendance interventions are sensitive to individual circumstances.

8.5 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 [Cheshire East Council – Children Missing Education / school attendance](#)

8.6 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.

The Local Authority will be notified when a pupil is deleted from the admission register for EHE in accordance with the regulations and local procedures.

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 school uses the national attendance and absence codes set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance guidance. The current national codes are summarised below.

The following codes are taken from [DfE attendance guidance and current codes](#)

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
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the Local Authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • 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