



QUEEN VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2023 - 2024

Policy Number:	QV School Policy - 2
Approved by:	LGB Meeting 4th October 2023
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As a school, we do our utmost to develop a partnership with parents and value the relationship between school and home; we work with the community to drive the school forward and ensure the children in our care are the very best that they can be. You and your child/ren play an important role in making our school successful.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is **unavoidable**. It is important that you make sure that your child attends regularly, this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

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

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

School will work with children and their parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance is not something that can be achieved in isolation by one person acting alone, it must be a concerted effort across all parties: the child; parents; all school staff; the governing body; the local authority; and other partners.

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child)

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Learning:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of circumstances such as being too ill to attend.

At Queen Victoria Primary School, we expect all of our pupils to attend school every day that they possibly can.

Research shows there is a strong correlation between good attendance and high achievement. We believe that good attendance levels maximise opportunities for each pupil to realise their full potential.

Safeguarding:

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (July 2018). Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) and School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances.
- Detecting early support through Early Help Assessment.

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting, Celebrating & Supporting Excellent Attendance

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and for children of primary school age it is important that this is role modelled to them on a daily basis. For all adults surrounding the child it is important that we recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the moment they start school (this includes children of non-compulsory school age, for example nursery). Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, children and all members of school staff. We recognise the connection between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Our aim is for every pupil to achieve at least good attendance is vital, in order to reach their full academic potential.

Queen Victoria Primary School has an attendance target of 96%. It is everyone's responsibility to make this possible. Through regular updates on the school website and through the school newsletter, we will share with you how we compare against our target.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all children;
- Regularly provide information about attendance through our communication channels;
- Report to you on your individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Consider the individual needs of each pupil and their families who have specific barriers to attendance (Equality Act 2010)
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Recognise good or improving attendance;
- Refer poor attendance to other agencies.

Incentives for Attendance 2023 – 2024

Termly/Half Termly Rewards	Weekly Rewards
<p>STAR Awards (Stars that attend regularly) Attendance every day for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 term = bronze badge• 2 terms = silver badge• 3 terms = gold badge <p>Plus, all children who earn a star, will be entered into a draw to win a family meal voucher.</p> <p>Half Termly Improved Attendance – if your attendance improves or you have 100%, you will receive a tuck shop voucher to redeem at break.</p>	<p>Best Class Attendance – the class with the best attendance - an additional 15 minutes play and 50 house points.</p> <p>All On Time Award – 20 house points.</p> <p>Scores on the Doors – 30 house points, if your class attendance is higher than the overall school attendance.</p>

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board:

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Queen Victoria Primary School Link Governor for Attendance is Mrs Samantha Hagerman.

The headteacher:

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual children
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

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

Queen Victoria Primary Senior Leader responsible for attendance is Mrs K Walker and can be contacted via the school office.

The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer for attendance support is responsible for:

- Monitoring late arrivals and absentees (daily)
- Monitoring contact made with regard to absence and passing relevant information to the class teacher
- Telephoning parents when no reason has been given for absence by 10am on the first day of absence
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality weekly, liaising with the Headteacher so that we can intervene as soon as absence gives cause for concern
- Monitoring register coding and alert staff of inconsistencies
- Liaising with the Education Support Service (ESS) and making referrals and arranging/attending clinics/meetings as needed
- Liaising with the family support worker with responsibility for medical needs and the School Health Advisor as needed
- Producing attendance figures for end of year reports and other reports as required
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher
- Working with the Education Support Service to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Advising the Headteacher and the designated senior leader (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer for Queen Victoria Primary is Mrs Halford

Class teacher

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office without delay.
- Promoting an environment where the children feel happy at school and enjoy attending regularly
- Working alongside parents to build positive relationships where concerns regarding attendance are addressed and discussed
- To praise children for punctuality and good attendance
- To identify concerning patterns of absence of children within their class and report it to the school attendance officer

- To inform the phase leader and school attendance officer when absence is impacting on achievement, so that appropriate action can be taken.

Staff with specific responsibilities e.g. SENCO & Phase Leader

Staff with specific responsibilities are responsible for:

- Checking the attendance of children they specifically work with
- Identifying the impact of attendance on individuals/groups of children.
- Supporting the class teacher and/or attendance officer for attendance support to resolve concerns regarding attendance involving the parents where appropriate.

All school office staff

All school office staff will if the attendance officer is unavailable:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the family support worker or attendance officer for attendance support, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Promptly relay any messages regarding attendance to the appropriate members of staff.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day on time, properly equipped and in a fit state to learn
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.50am on the day of the absence, and advise when they are expected to return. Parents to use dedicated School Absence line and leave a message.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child and to keep all contact details up-to-date
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Take family holidays in the school holiday period
- Engage with school staff where concerns regarding attendance are raised.

Children

Children are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Let a trusted adult know if something is worrying them about coming to school
- To be ready, respectful and safe

Admission and Attendance Registers:

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register.

All children must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register.

The admission register must contain specific personal details of every child in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended.

A child's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

The attendance register must be taken by schools at the start of each morning session of each school day, and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will take our attendance register at the start (8.50am – 9am) of the first session of each school day and once during the second session (12.45pm – 1.30pm depending on lunch sitting). It will mark whether every child is:

- In attendance
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Day to Day Processes

Alongside accurate recording of attendance and absence, we have robust day to day processes to track and follow up absence and poor punctuality which are rigorously applied across the school.

Children must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

Gates are opened to the site at 8.30am to allow children into the building, this eases congestion around our school

Unplanned absence

The child's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible, by contacting the school.

This can be done as follows:

- Phone the main school office on the dedicated school absence line 01384 812545 and press option 1 to report your child's absence. This is a recorded service and it is important that you clearly state your child's name and class with an explanation for their absence.
- Phone the school attendance officer on 01384 814356
- Email absences@queen-vic.dudley.sch.uk which is monitored throughout the school day
- Speaking directly to the senior leaders on the school gates when bringing siblings to school in the morning. The Family Support Worker and Pastoral Lead will usually be available to speak with you during this time, if they are not available please speak to a member of staff in the main school office.

You must explain your child's absence. Unexplained absences will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or where there are on-going concerns regarding the child's attendance and/or punctuality. The school may ask the child's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised: parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the child's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence of the appointment. We would not expect this to be a frequent occurrence unless there are on-going medical needs that the school has been made aware of.

If a child needs to be absent for a whole day, for example, to attend a funeral or hospital appointment, a Leave of Absence form needs to be completed and returned with evidence to support the reason for request, e.g. an appointment card. We require a minimum of 24 hours notice for a Leave of Absence request.

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

The child's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence (10 days notice is required for leave of absence for longer than one whole day).

Lateness and punctuality

School monitors lateness of children as being punctual for school is crucial. Being late into school causes disruption to that child's learning and their confidence. It is paramount therefore that all children arrive at school on time.

A child who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed, will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The school site opens at 8.30am for all year groups. We expect the children to arrive at school between 8.30am and 8.50am. The school gates close at 8.50am and this indicates that the school day has started. Registers will be marked at this time and your child will receive a late mark if they are not present in the class.

Children arriving after the gates have closed at 8.50am will be marked as late and must come into school via the main office.

The attendance register will be closed at 9.20am, 30 minutes after school's start time. In accordance with attendance regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a 'U' mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If unauthorised lateness persists it could result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or enforcement proceedings against you.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with an appropriate member of school staff to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Following up unexplained absence

It is vital that parents inform us of their child's absence from school. Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Text the child's parent/carer (and where appropriate social worker) on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason, followed by a phone call if no reply is received. If the school cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, the school may contact other services, for example the police, if there is a genuine concern regarding the wellbeing of the child and the family.
- 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
- In the event we are not able to contact you on the first day of your child's absence from school, we will continue with daily phone calls until contact has been made. On the third consecutive day of an unexplained absence, school will visit the main family residence to do a safe and well check. **This may be sooner than the third day if there are specific concerns around safeguarding**
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our attendance officer for attendance support and/or a member of the Senior Leadership Team if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority and/or Children's Services if attendance becomes a concern
- Report the child 'Absent in Education' (Education Support Service)

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers of their child's attendance through school reports and during planned Parent Evening Meetings across the school year. If there is a concern regarding an increased absence level, the classteacher will hold discussions informally at the end of the school day. Parent/carers will also receive half-termly personalised text messages, if attendance falls below 95%.

If a deterioration in a child's attendance is identified through regular monitoring by the school's Attendance Officer, a hierarchy of standard letters will report this to parent/carers:

- Letter 1: when attendance falls below 95%, offering support if there are parental concerns
- Letter 2: when attendance falls below 93%, seeking medical evidence for all absence with consideration of a future Fixed Penalty Notice
- Letter 3: when attendance falls below 90%, with an attendance support plan
- Letter 4: when attendance falls below 85%, with further support from external agencies, such as Early Help

Parent/carers can also request to view their child's attendance at any time.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as genuine illness, medical/dental appointments, which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Unauthorised leave of absence/holiday or day trips in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend school for any reason, please speak to the School Attendance Officer, your child's teacher, our Family Support Worker, Pastoral Lead or members of the Senior Leadership Team, who will work with you to resolve any concerns.

Approval for term-time absence

Holidays in Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents not to take children on holiday in school time. Term time holidays will not be authorised by Queen Victoria Primary School

Leave of Absence:

It is an expectation of this school that a leave of Absence shall not be granted in term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Only the Headteacher (or a Deputy Headteacher in the Headteacher's absence) may authorise such a request and all applications for a Leave of Absence must be made on a form provided by the school. Where a parent takes a Leave of Absence to which the application was refused or takes a Leave of Absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the Local Authority may be requested. When requesting a fixed penalty fine the school may calculate the period of days taken within a 12-month period.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to a leave of absence and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

The Headteacher will only grant a Leave of Absence to a child during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A Leave of Absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for. Even where exceptional circumstances have been agreed, school will not authorise leave of absence for a period of over five days due to the detrimental impact on a child's education.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and no less than 10 school days before the absence. Requests must be submitted using the school's Leave of Absence request form, available from the school office. The Headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller children 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.

Leave of Absence shall not be granted unless:

- (a) an application has been made in advance to the school by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides: and
- (b) the school considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Queen Victoria Primary will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances. Only in the case of an emergency should these requests be made less than 10 days in advance of leave (for request totalling one day or more) and 48 hours for requests of less than one day. Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing. A general guide for parents, is leave for any holiday, activity or event that could be arranged during the annual 13-week holiday time would not be authorised. School will not provide work for a child who is away from school due to an unauthorised absence.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parent/carers proceed with the leave it will be recorded as a (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on the school register.

Failure to notify and/or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least 5-day notice will result in all absence being recorded as (O) (unauthorised absence not covered by any other description).

If a child does not return to school after the leave of absence date, school will investigate the reasons surrounding the absence, refer to the Local Authority and report to Education Support Service (Child is Absent from Education) under Regulation 8, 1 (f) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 allow the school to consider removal from the school register.

Where requests of leave of absence are made, school will inform all parents of the consequences of this leave. The school may communicate the response to the request to all legal parents, irrespective of whether they live together (unless there are safeguarding concerns/court orders in place).

Legal sanctions

The school, via the local authority, can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Children Who Are Absent from Education:

Children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. Our procedures for dealing with children that are absent from education are based on the LA and DCSB procedures. We will ensure that we follow these procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education. Children who are missing from school have a higher chance of being at risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation. We will ensure that we report children absent from education to the Local Authority CME officer, in line with statutory procedures.

Attendance monitoring

School will regularly analyse attendance and absence data to identify children or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across year groups, vulnerable groups and at an individual child level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, such as Pupil Premium and SEND. Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing body.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance information to parent/carers of children whose attendance is below 95%
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with children and families, including personalised half termly text messages for targeted attendance concerns (Persistent and Severe Absentees for previous academic year and absentees during the first week of the new school year)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share attendance information with the academy trust, local authorities, children's services, DfE and other partners.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a child misses 50% or more of school for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and wellbeing, and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the persistent or severe absence mark, or is at risk of moving towards that mark, is given priority and you will be informed of this. This will be done via a standard letter (see Reporting to Parent/Carers). Persistent or severe absentees are tracked and monitored carefully, combined with academic support where absence affects attainment and/or wellbeing.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of children who the school considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Telephone Numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence. We need to have your contact numbers at all times. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we do not then something important may be missed. **You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details.**

School is expected to hold at least two contact numbers for every child.

Deletion from Roll:

For any child leaving, other than at the end of Year 6, parents are required to complete an Authority Transfer Form' which can be obtained from School's Admissions. This form is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all of our children, even those who leave us. Children cannot be deleted from the school roll without this information and will be classed as absent until we have confirmation they are safe and attending another school.

However, if a transfer form is not required, such as if the school does not receive an authority's transfer form, is leaving the country or being home educated, a Leaver's form, which can be collected from the school office must be completed by the parent.

Addressing Attendance Concerns:

Our school will always show a commitment to building strong relationships with families and it is these relationships that can be the foundation of good attendance. School will keep you informed of your child's attendance and will communicate with you if your child's attendance is a concern. Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. Our School Attendance Officer, Family Support Worker or Pastoral Lead is always available to support our families in ensuring high levels of attendance for all children.

However, if your child's attendance does not improve and unauthorised absences persist, school may refer the case to Dudley Council's Education Support Service (ESS). They are a statutory service who issue sanctions such as Penalty Notices or refer the case for prosecution in the Magistrates Court, based on the evidence provided by the school.

We understand that there can be barriers to attendance, and that some children will face greater barriers than their peers. We can use outside agencies to support with this, such as the school nurse. This can include children who suffer from long-term

medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and children to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external agencies where appropriate.

Summary:

All school staff are committed to working with parents and children as the best way to guarantee a higher level of attendance as possible; and that through good attendance, ensure every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted

GDPR – Personal Data

This policy is collecting personal data and accordingly adheres to the principles of data protection law. Further information on the lawful basis of using personal data can be found in the school's privacy notices. The personal data obtained will also be managed in line with the school's data retention policy. For further information, please refer to the school's data protection policy.

Policy Approved by Chair of Governors - October 2023

Policy to be reviewed - September 2024

APPENDIX 1 – ATTENDANCE CODES

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

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
/	Present (AM)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (PM)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed.
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered.
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
AUTHORISED ABSENCE		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made.
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absence due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observation
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed.

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day.

APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDANCE DESCRIPTIONS

Percentage Attendance	Descriptor
98 – 100%	Excellent
96 – 97.9%	Good
95 – 95.9%	Expected
90 – 94.9%	Requires Improvement
Below 90%	Persistent Absentee
Below 75%	Severe Absentee

APPENDIX 3: DFE GUIDANCE SUMMARY TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

ALL PUPILS

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness)</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in the area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

PUPILS AT RISK OF BECOMING PERSISTENTLY ABSENT

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barrier to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to present the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barrier are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agreed that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

PERSISTENTLY ABSENT PUPILS

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local areas, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort)</p>

SEVERELY ABSENT PUPILS

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance in to children in need and child protection plans.</p>

SUPPORT FOR COHORTS OF PUPILS WITH LOWER ATTENDANCE THAN THEIR PEERS

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
Not applicable	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR SEND WITH POOR ATTENDANCE

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Working closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure jointed up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help support leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.</p> <p>Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.</p> <p>Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.</p>

MONITORING

Parents are expected to:	School are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to;
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.	Ofsted considers schools' efforts to improve or sustain high attendance as part of inspections. Multi-academy trusts regularly review attendance data and support schools.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Groups monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.