




**ACE Tiverton**  
*Part of the ACE Schools Multi Academy Trust*

# Attendance Policy

| Issue | Date                       | Author/Reviewer<br>Job Role                     | Comments                    | Signed   |
|-------|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|
| 1     | 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 | Hannah Smart<br>Head Teacher<br>Tiverton School | Adopted for ACE<br>Tiverton | <br>Denis Parsons<br>Chair<br>Education & Safeguarding<br>Committee |

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## 1. Aims

- 1.1 Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
- (i) Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
  - (ii) Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
  - (iii) Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- 1.2 We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1 This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
- [The Education Act 1996](#)
  - [The Education Act 2002](#)
  - [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
  - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
  - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
  - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
  - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
  - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
  - [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- 2.2 This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- 2.3 This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 3. School procedures

#### 3.1 Attendance register.

3.1.1 By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

3.1.2 The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present.
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity.
- Absent.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

3.1.3 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.

3.1.4 Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

3.1.5 Pupils must arrive in school by 9am on each school day.

3.1.6 The register for the first session will be taken between 9:00am and 9:15am. The register for the second session will be taken between 1:00pm and 1:15pm.

#### 3.2 Unplanned absence.

3.2.1 Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.45am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). This can be done by telephoning the school – 01752 776848. They should also phone the school before 8:45am on each day of any subsequent days.

3.2.2 Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents

to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

- 3.2.3 If the child has previously been issued a medical evidence notice letter due to concerns about poor attendance, then all absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless medical evidence is supplied.

### 3.3 Medical or dental appointments.

- 3.3.1 Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- 3.3.2 Please notify the school about any planned absences for appointments by telephoning the school – 01752 776848 and send in a copy of the appointment card/letter at your earliest convenience.
- 3.3.3 Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### 3.4 Lateness and punctuality.

- 3.4.1 A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- 3.4.2 A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- 3.4.3 The majority of children arrive to school via school transport provided by the local authority. If school transport are responsible for a child's lateness then this will be taken into account. If there is a repeated concern then the school will take this up with the relevant transport officer.

### 3.5 Following up absence.

- 3.5.1 The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

### 3.6 Reporting to parents

- 3.6.1 The school will report the percentage attendance of children on the IEP reports that are sent to parents three times a year. A full attendance breakdown report is available to parents at any time upon request.

## 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence.

- 4.1.1 Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

- 4.1.2 The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head teacher's discretion.

- 4.1.3 Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Death of a close family member.

- 4.1.4 The school does not consider the following as valid reasons for authorised absence:

- Lack of transport to school, for example if your child has been excluded from school transport or if they have missed the bus/taxi.
- Truancy.

- Staying home because another family member is sick.
- Holidays/days out.

#### 4.2 Legal sanctions.

- 4.2.1 The local authority will issue a penalty notice on behalf of the school for unauthorised absences.
- 4.2.2 If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- 4.2.3 The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head teacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:
- A 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.
- 4.2.4 If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

### 5. Strategies for promoting attendance

- 5.1 The school aims to promote good attendance and does this through issuing bronze, silver and gold certificates three times a year.
- 5.2 The school also nominates a family to receive a Christmas hamper each year which is provided by the education welfare service.

### 6. Attendance monitoring

- 6.1 The school and the link education welfare officer monitor pupil absence on a monthly basis.
- 6.2 If a pupil's absence goes above 8% we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this and offer support.
- 6.3 If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider making a referral to the education welfare officer. We will also consider issuing a medical evidence letter. In these cases all absence is considered unauthorised unless medical evidence is supplied.

- 6.4 The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- 6.5 The local authority take action on unauthorised absence.
- 6.6 Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with Cluster representatives.

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The Governing Board (Plymouth Cluster).

- 7.1.1 The Cluster representatives are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### 7.2 The Head teacher.

- 7.2.1 The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Cluster representatives.

- 7.2.2 The Head teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### 7.3 The attendance officer.

#### 7.3.1 The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head teacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Head teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices



#### 7.4 Class Teachers.

7.4.1 Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office via SIMS.

#### 7.5 Administrators.

7.5.1 Administrators are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. They are also expected to make contact with the families who are absent without reason.

### 8. Monitoring arrangements

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the school. At every review, the policy will be shared with the cluster representatives.

### 9. Links with other policies

9.1 This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

## 1. Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

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

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

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

