



SHEFFIELD INCLUSION CENTRE

Building Brighter Futures

Attendance Policy

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Contents

	Page
1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. School Procedures	4 - 6
4. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence	6 - 7
5. Attendance Monitoring	7 - 8
6. Roles and Responsibilities	8 – 10
7. 6 th Day provision	10
8. Strategies for Promoting Attendance	11
9. Appendix1- Attendance codes	12 – 13
10.Appendix 2- Penalty Notice	14

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil, where appropriate, has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [Part 6 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- [Part 3 of the Education Act 2002](#)
- [Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

School census guidance

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

3. School Procedures

The attendance register will be taken at the start of registration during the school day. The register will be marked in accordance with the Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024. It will record whether each pupil is:

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

The register will be taken for the AM and PM sessions only at Bases due to small size of the building and numbers and at Spring Lane lesson by lesson. The AM register closes at 11AM and the PM register closes at 1:10PM.

With the exception of those on reduced timetables, pupils arriving at the centres after the registers have closed will be marked as 'late after the register has closed' using the U code. Those on reduced timetables will be marked as 'late after the register has closed' if they arrive 30 or more minutes after their designated start time, this is due to the distance some pupils need to travel and transport methods to the school.

Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers 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 10AM or as soon as practically possible. Parents/carers can contact the school via the following methods:

Attendance Officer– 01142531988 Option 1

School Reception – 01142531988

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

Medical or Dental Appointments

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/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupils should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parents should contact the school in advance of a medical or dental appointment and inform the Attendance Officer of the date, time and length of the appointment.

A copy of the appointment letter/card should also be provided in advance of the appointment and be kept within the pupils' information folder.

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.

Marking Registers

On arrival to school pupils will be registered on the whole school list when they enter the school. The Attendance Officer will use this information to ensure that pupils arriving late are registered accordingly.

A pupil who arrives to school late but before the register has closed will be marked as late for the am/pm session, using the appropriate code (L). A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent for the AM/PM session, using the appropriate code (U).

The register should be taken within the first 10 mins of registration and any amendments made appropriately during the lesson. Registers should not be left unmarked (-) at any point following.

Once at Spring Lane pupils should attend each timetabled lesson and the register should be marked as follows (bases to mark AM and PM register as internal truancy is not possible):

- Pupil attends lesson - / or \
- Pupil attends lesson but leaves before the lesson ends - / or \ with a behaviour log for 'leaving class without permission'
- Pupil attends lesson but arrives late – L with a behaviour log for 'arrived late to lesson' and how many minutes
- Pupil does not attend the lesson but has been seen by the teacher/TA in the building - / or \ with a behaviour log for 'refused to attend class'
- Pupil does not attend the lesson and has not been seen by the teacher/TA in the building – N

The register may be prepopulated to accommodate any planned absences (suspensions - E, medical appointments - M, unauthorised holidays - G) and should not be changed or overwritten by classroom staff. If there is a discrepancy between the register and the pupils attendance this should be highlighted to the Attendance Officer at the earliest opportunity and by 10:30AM for the morning session and by 1:10PM for the afternoon session at the latest.

Following up Absence

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.

A text message will be sent to parents/carers for any absences that are registered for the morning session. This message will be sent by 9.30AM each morning and will be followed up with a phone call to parents/carers if a response is not received by 11AM (Vulnerable List by 9.30AM). If a response is not received by the following morning the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Safe and wells are conducted by SIC Staff, which triggers response for pupils who are recognised as highly vulnerable in the morning. We have a vulnerable pupil list for pupils who are a cause for concern across the school.

Pupils Signing Out

Where a pupil has to depart early for an appointment they must bring a letter from their parent/carer making a request for this. In the absence of a note, tutors should check the request with the parent/carer where possible or send the pupils to reception or the base lead to contact home. When leaving school; pupils should sign the signing out book, a precaution in case of an evacuation alarm. Pupils should be given an authorisation slip to take with them, in case anybody is to stop the pupil to get clarification. Should a pupil return from such an appointment, they should sign back into school at reception and inform the attendance officer

Pupils Sickness during the School Day

When a pupil is **clearly** not well enough to stay in a lesson they should be escorted to the Leaders office. Leaders should check the pupil's attendance record before considering sending the pupil home. Pupils will not normally be sent home for minor ailments especially if their attendance is a cause for concern and there is a pattern of irregular attendance.

If it is deemed necessary that a pupil is too ill to remain in school then parental contact must be made and parents/carers informed of their child's illness. A pupil cannot be sent home unless contact is made with the parent/carer. In normal circumstances a parent or another responsible adult agreed by the parent/carer will need to collect their child from school. On the rare occasion that this may not be possible the parent/carer may give permission for the child to make their own way home from school. All pupils leaving school must sign out in reception so their attendance record can be updated.

In the case of a medical emergency, the priority must be to seek prompt medical attention and contact the parent/carers immediately.

Pupils on Personalised Timetables (Intensive Support Programme (ISP))

Some pupils, where appropriate, may have their time in school reduced to support their needs and to encourage positive engagement in education. Many of our pupils start SIC after long periods of absence from mainstream and full time is sometimes not appropriate. Where this is the case, pupils may participate in an agreed reduced education arrangement for an agreed period. Pupils on part time provision must sign in at reception when they enter the sites. Examples of the personalised timetables are Twilight sessions and education offsite. Pupils have personalised timetables for many reasons such as medical issues, localisation, criminal exploitation, mental health issues, unmet needs etc. A Local Authority fortnightly review will need to be completed for pupils on reduced timetables (See Behaviour Policy)

4. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Granting Approval for Term-Time Absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The school considers each application

for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

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 pupils parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents/carers' 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 pupils is attending educational provision

Absences will be **unauthorised** if:

- No legitimate reason can be given for the absence
- The pupil is known to be on holiday – leave of absence will not be granted for holidays

Other absences will be coded depending on the nature of the absence. For further clarification please see the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents/carers must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account: (See Appendix

- 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 pupils 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Attendance Monitoring

The Attendance officer monitors pupil absence daily. Once registers are completed, the parents/carers of any absentees will receive a text message informing them of their child's absence. If there is no response to this text by 11AM the parents will receive a phone call from the Attendance officer/ Base Lead.

If there is still no response or reason given by the end of the school day, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If at a later date, a legitimate reason for the absence can be given the recorded code may be updated.

If a pupil is absent the Safeguarding Team will complete a home visit the same day to ensure the pupil is safe. These visits will be repeated every 3 days whilst the pupil remains absent from education. If after contacting parents/carers a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving outside agencies including Social Care.

The Safeguarding Team hold a daily safe and well meeting for all absentees and a weekly attendance meeting where those pupils with persistent absence are monitored and any support available is put in place to re-engage pupils.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Management Committee

The Management Committee is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Safeguarding Team and the Deputy Headteacher
- Works with the Safeguarding Team and the Deputy Headteacher to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Safeguarding Team, the Deputy Headteacher and the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Informs parents/carers if a pupil absconds from the school site
- Amends and updates the register accordingly when notified of reasons for absence
- Completes all attendance administration including holiday fines, prosecution papers.

- Prepares data and reports to SLT and attendance team.
- Prepares data
- Prepare reward certificates
- Monitor online/remote learning.
- Daily reporting of absences

The DHT

The DHT – oversees the implementation of this policy and works directly with the Safeguarding Team to prevent, monitor and improve poor attendance.

- Leads whole school initiatives relating to attendance
- Implements whole school and individual strategies to address attendance issues
- Liaises with the Safeguarding Team and Attendance Officer and data manager on a regular basis to ensure attendance is a priority within the school
- Liaises with the Headteacher, to produce overall school statistics that meet both DfEs and LA guidelines
- Regularly updates SLT and the Management Committee regarding attendance and any issues that arise
- Leads the weekly attendance monitoring meeting
- Implements strategies to support and improve persistent absence
- Provides direct line management for the Safeguarding Lead

Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead works closely with the Attendance Officer and the Safeguarding Team to monitor and improve attendance.

The Safeguarding Lead:

- Provides support management for the Attendance Officer
- Supports the DHT to implement whole school and individual strategies to address attendance issues
- Initiates external agency referrals to support pupils whose attendance is an issue
- Ensures the Safeguarding Team complete regular home visits to those pupils whose attendance is an issue

Senior Leaders

- Oversee the attendance of pupils within their key stage/base
- Ensure that all members of the key stage team are fully aware of the documentation and are following the procedures related to attendance and punctuality
- Liaise with parent/carers where there are serious concerns about attendance issues i.e. when a pupils becomes a PA or is at risk of becoming PA
- Lead progress meetings with teachers to discuss behaviour, attendance and progress
- Support the implementation of personalised timetables where appropriate and necessary

- Oversee the completion of relevant reduced timetable paperwork and ensure this is reviewed on a fortnightly basis
- Attend the weekly attendance monitoring meeting
- Ensure that all members of the key stage team are promoting good attendance through the use of positive rewards
- Support the Attendance Officer to ensure that registers are completed accurately and in a timely manner

Learning Mentors/Base leads at the bases

- Oversee the attendance of pupils within their base
- Liaise with parents/carers where there are serious concerns about attendance issues i.e. when a pupil becomes a PA or is at risk of becoming PA
- Support the implementation of personalised timetables where appropriate and necessary
- Fortnightly reviews
- Home Visits on the day for non-attenders
- Daily phone calls home
- Oversee the completion of relevant part time timetable paperwork and ensure this is reviewed on a fortnightly basis
- Attend the weekly attendance monitoring meeting
- Ensure that all members of the base team are promoting good attendance through the use of positive rewards
- Support the Admin Officer to ensure that registers are completed accurately and in a timely manner
- External agency referrals

Classroom Teachers & Classroom Support Staff

Classroom teachers & classroom support staff are responsible for recording attendance on a lesson-by-lesson basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via SIMS each lesson.

Classroom staff are expected to:

- Take the register within the first 10 minutes
- Amend the register accordingly throughout the lesson if additional pupils arrive
- Record lateness to the lesson with an L mark and complete a subsequent behaviour log
- Record pupils leaving the lesson without permission by completing a behaviour log
- Inform the Attendance Officer and the Data Manager on the same day if a register is incorrect or a pupil is missing from the register
- Inform the Attendance Officer if a pupil absconds from the school site
- Liaise with parent/carers when concerns begin to arise about attendance
- To promote good attendance through positive rewards

7. Sixth Day Provision

Due to the Sheffield Inclusion Centre having permanently excluded pupils on roll on the sixth day. There are often complications in receiving paperwork, communication with parents and waiting for the appeals process to complete. This can take 14 days plus to happen. Sheffield Inclusion Centre use the dual registration process as the sending school do not take the pupil off roll until 14 days, in case there is challenge from the parent/carer of the permanently excluded pupil during this transition period. Sometimes pupils start on reduced timetables due to their needs and previous school experiences such as reduced timetables at their mainstream school.

8. Strategies for promoting attendance

Staff at Sheffield Inclusion Centre are committed to improving the life chances of the pupils that join the school. To ensure that pupils who are struggling to attend are supported, there are a range of support strategies in place which include:

- Headteacher meets all admissions
- Day 1 response to absence – texts and calls, safe and well
- Day 2 safe and wellbeing visit- sooner for more vulnerable pupils.
- The use of alternative provision placements where appropriate
- The use of reduced timetable where appropriate
- Daily safe and well meeting.
- Regular safe and wellbeing visits for persistent absentees
- One to One outreach support for persistent absentees
- Outreach work- engagement work with pupils and building up relationships and developing education to stepping stone bases/ APs
- External agency support (FIS, A&I, CYT etc.)
- Absentee visit on the day by each base
- Travel training for pupils
- Mentoring internal- keyworker programme
- Work experience
- Parent drop in clinics
- Vocational Curriculum
- Form Tutor calling home if absent
- Safe and well visit (Home Visit)
- Home Education (Academic and Mentoring)
- Rewards for attendance and significance in out of school trips (Platinum Certificates, Half term Trips etc)
- Social prescribing
- Community Links and mentoring programmes
- Parental Advocacy
- DFE Task force
- Prosecution
- Attendance Meetings (weekly)
- Coffee mornings
- Online learning/Remote Learning

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Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision - Face to face education provided off school site	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Chapel House / Becton Outreach / CAMHS Lodges/Hospital Ed - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move - Attending Sheffield Inclusion Centre	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected

Attendance Codes

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence

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Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

5 consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days.

Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.