



Attendance Policy **2020-21**

This report should be read in conjunction with other policies:-

- ***DfE- School Attendance – September 2019***
- ***DfE- Children Missing in Education – September 2017***

Staff Member(s) Responsible:	CBY
Date:	27/09/2020
Review Date:	27/09/2021

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers to fulfil their responsibility in making sure that their child receives a full-time education and is always punctual so that they can access that education to the best of their ability.
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

<https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Principles

So that students can achieve as well as they possibly can, they need to attend School regularly. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole School community. Promoting good attendance will also help students to meet the expectations that they will face in the workplace.

The School will promote good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance by students will be recognised appropriately. All students should be at School, on time, every day the School is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

The attendance policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of students. Schools have a duty in law to refer any concerns about persistent poor attendance to the Families First Local Support Team for further action.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the student is present; engaged in an approved educational activity off-site; or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from School has to be classified by the School, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only School can authorise the absence, not parent/carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE from School means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES are those which the School does not consider reasonable and is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence. This includes:

- parent/carers keeping students off School unnecessarily;
- truancy for all or part of the School day;
- absences where the School has not yet received an acceptable explanation;
- any other circumstance where the Headteacher has not given authorisation.

Students are sometimes reluctant to attend School. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the School, the parent/carers and the student. If a student is reluctant to attend, parents/carers should never cover up their absence or to give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from School without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

The School is always willing to support parent/carers whose children are experiencing difficulties that may result in non-attendance. Parents/carers should contact the School at an early stage so that we can work together to resolve any problems. Working in partnership nearly always brings success.

When all measures to improve the student's attendance have failed, the EWO can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parent/carers or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the student. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Alleyne's Academy have employed Attend EDC Ltd an Independent Education Welfare Company. They will work with the school to raise attendance and deal with welfare matters. They will communicate with you if there is an issue they can support us with. If a parent/carer or a student wishes to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information they can do so on 07840 382660.

Procedures

- Parents/carers will be informed annually via the School website about the School Attendance Policy.
- The School has a PAUSE system which focusses on Punctuality, Attendance, Uniform, School Planner and Equipment.
- Students who achieve good attendance will be recognised in many ways including; congratulations in praise assemblies, letters home recognising good attendance, individual tutor group rewards and an end of year celebration trip.
- If a student is absent from School, parent/carers should contact the School by telephone before 8.50 am. Parent/carers are able to leave a message on the answerphone out of school hours.
- If no notification has been received by 9.30am, the School will make first day contact. This contact will be done using the School Comms text messaging service. **If no reply is received VIP Education will make contact and possibly visit the child's home.**
- Students who arrive late for School and miss morning registration must sign in at reception.
- The official School register will close at:
Morning session – 9.20am **(Students are expected to be in school by 8.45am)**

Afternoon session – 1.40pm

- Where a Head of Progress and Support has concerns that non-attendance is adversely affecting student progress they will consult the parents/carers in the first instance.
- Attendance will be monitored every two weeks by the Senior Leader (Attendance) and letters will be sent home where there are concerns about poor attendance. Home visits will be made where appropriate.
- The Senior Leader (Attendance) may convene a meeting between parent/carers, appropriate School staff, and any relevant external agencies. This meeting may also consider issues of punctuality and behaviour.
- If a student has 20 unauthorised sessions during a twelve week period, a referral to the Local Authority will be made by the school.

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/Attendance/home.aspx>

- If students are persistently late (10 U codes) over a 12 week period, this can result in a parent/ carer receiving a fixed penalty notice.
- The Local Authority will review the current situation; offer support and consider further action, which could be to recognise that attendance has improved or to follow more formal procedures where attendance has not improved. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent/carer receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.
- Parent/carers who are subject to a Penalty Notice have 3 choices:
 - pay the £60 fine within 21 days;
 - pay £120 after 21 days but within 28 days;
 - don't pay the fine. In this case, the Notice will be withdrawn and Magistrates Court proceedings will start. This could result in a fine of up to £1,000 for each student whose attendance is causing concern and for each parent/carer involved in the prosecution.
- The School has a procedure in place for roll call in the events of an evacuation.

Absence During a School Term (Holidays)

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher's and Governors have determined that:

- In exceptional circumstances permission may be granted for a maximum of five days of holiday providing your child has a good (95% or higher) attendance record over the previous three terms.
- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for

consideration by the Headteacher, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.

- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Officer will be notified.

If we suspect a holiday has been taken during term time without a request for leave being submitted, a home visit will be completed and a suspected holiday letter will be sent to parents/ carers. This could result in a fine being issued.

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 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.

We encourage parents to notify the school at the earliest possible convenience of medical appointment.

This may be via a letter or note in a child's day book. However, parents may also send in a copy of the appointment letter to be kept on file.

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.

Off-Site Educational Activities

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Roles and responsibilities

People responsible for attendance matters in this School are:

- Policy and Procedures: Mr C. Bailey (Senior Assistant Headteacher) c.bailey@alleynes.staffs.sch.uk
- Attendance Clerk: Mrs L. Smith l.smith@alleynes.staffs.sch.uk
- VIP Education Welfare Officer: Mrs A. Jackson info@vipeducation.co.uk

Tutors

- Mark registers accurately and on time.

- Identify the correct code for absence.
- Pass on to reception staff promptly all communications from parent/carers regarding planned absences.
- Challenge students re: poor attendance.
- Monitor attendance patterns and make referrals to Senior Leader (Attendance) or Heads of Progress and Support where there are causes for concern.
- Celebrate excellent attendance.

Senior Leader (Attendance)

- Oversee the tracking of students with poor or irregular attendance.
- Ensure there is rigour in following up pupil absence.
- Arrange meetings with parents of poor attenders. Arrange home visits where appropriate.
- Monitor the attendance of a Year Group and liaise with Heads of Progress and Support.
- Publish half termly attendance figures.
- Issue praise letters and incentives for good attendance.
- Have regular meetings with Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion)

Attendance Clerk

- Monitor completion of on-line registers.
- Make first day contact with parent/carers to establish reasons for absence and alert parents/carers to cases of absence without their knowledge. This will be done initially using the Schools Comms text messaging system.
- Record all notifications of reasons for absence.
- Print off half termly statistics.

Educational Welfare Officer

- Liaise with Senior Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) via monthly meetings.
- Make contact with parent/carers where there are causes for concern.
- Record contact made in relation to these cases.
- Provide support to families when a case has been opened with Building Resilient Families.
- Conduct attendance clinics/ home visits as required.
- Speak with students on a one-to-one/ group basis regarding attendance.
- Confirm in writing future requirements regarding attendance and medical notes.
- Provide feedback to the School – i.e. results of initial investigation and an expectation of future Educational Welfare Officer input.
- Inform School of referral made to other external agencies.
- Organise multi-agency attendance panel meetings when a case has been opened with Building Resilient Families.
- Issue fixed penalty notices or initiate Court proceedings.

Leadership Group

- Attend multi-agency Attendance Surgery meetings.
- Monitor patterns of attendance by Year Group.
- Report on attendance patterns to the Governing Body.
- Provide information for the Families First Local Support Team when requested.
- Liaise with Educational Welfare Officer (Attend EDC)

Governors

- Set annual attendance targets.
- Review attendance patterns.
- Meet with parents whose child's attendance falls below 80% for non-medical reasons.

Using Attendance Data

- A pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.
- The Attendance Administrator/Manager will provide relevant teachers with regular attendance for each pupil within their tutor group/class.

Pupils will be grouped into categories based on their percentage attendance as follows:

GREEN GROUP
97% - 100%
WELL DONE - THIS IS EXCELLENT!

YELLOW GROUP
90% - 96.9%
LOW ATTENDANCE

RED GROUP
Less than 90%
PERSISTENT ABSENCE PUPIL

Attendance during the school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which approximates to this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons

Summary

The School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parent/carers and to promote good attendance. Equally, parent/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parent/carers as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Further Information

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on: safeguarding, behaviour and SEN. Please also follow this link for further advice: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Appendix 1- COVID-19 Addendum

This policy amendment has been written to reflect the changes made to the Attendance Policy and following wider opening of schools during the Coronavirus pandemic and should be read in conjunction with the school's Attendance and Safeguarding Policies.

DfE guidance *Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020* (updated May 12th) states:

Attendance

No one with symptoms should attend a setting for any reason. Eligible children – including priority groups - are strongly encouraged to attend their education setting, unless they are self-isolating or they are clinically vulnerable (in which case they should follow medical advice). If someone in their household is extremely clinically vulnerable, they should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions. Families should notify their nursery/school/college as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together. Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time, and schools and colleges will not be held to account for attendance levels. Schools and colleges should continue to inform social workers where children with a social worker do not attend.

Schools and colleges should resume taking their attendance register and continue to complete the online Educational Setting Status form which gives the Department for Education daily updates on how many children and staff are attending. The Department will continue to monitor attendance at early years settings, via local authorities. This is to ensure that we have up-to-date information on available early years and childcare provision during the coronavirus outbreak, which children are accessing it and to monitor sufficiency in particular areas.

The Alleyne's Academy will:

Resume the register of attendance on SIMS according to the following codes:

Attendance scenario	Recorded as
Children in attendance	Present /
Children absent for reason not yet known	N
Children absent from school due to illness other than COVID-19	I
Children unable to attend due to requirements of self-isolation relating to suspected case of COVID-19 (attendance not required)	8
Children unable to attend due to illness of Covid -19 (attendance authorised)	7
Shielding due to Covid- 19 (attendance not required)	9
Children in year groups for whom school is	C

open but parents have opted to keep their child at home	
Children who are not expected to be in school (remote learning)	X

- Complete the daily Educational Setting Status, reporting those children in attendance to the DfE
- Temporarily extend morning register until 9.30am due to staggered start times
- Parents to follow normal procedures to inform of child absence – email the school via the website <https://www.alleynesacademy.co.uk/contact-us.php> and/or phone **01785 337400**.
- Contact parents (email/text/telephone call) if a child who is expected to be in school does not attend and school is not notified as per normal first day absence procedures.
- Explore reasons for non-attendance and address barriers to attendance with them as appropriate.
- Contact parents to identify those children who fall into either the ‘clinically vulnerable’ group or the ‘clinically extremely vulnerable’ group or who live with someone in either of these categories. This information will be recorded in a ‘COVID Vulnerable Group’ register
- Carry out regular ‘safe and well’ checks with children considered to be ‘vulnerable’ at least weekly (including but not limited to children with an EHCP, (P)LAC, children with a Social Worker (CP / CIN)
- Continue to liaise with a child’s Social Worker should they not attend school.
- Parents of Key Worker children who do not need full time childcare may choose to send their child to school on some days of the week.
- Other children who have returned to school following wider reopening will be encouraged to attend school full time.
- No Fixed Penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised absence during the period of time covered by this policy (expected to be until the end of July 2020 in the first instance.)
- Children who display any potential symptoms of COVID-19 will be immediately isolated and parents will be contacted and requested to collect the child immediately. (Please refer to Risk Assessment Reopening Handbook for detailed guidance on procedure when dealing with a suspected case).
- Children who have displayed symptoms must stay away from school for 7 days or until they are well (if longer) or until a negative COVID-19 test is received.
- If a member of their household displays symptoms (or receives a positive COVID-19 test) they should self-isolate for 14 days. Should the household member receive a negative test result, the child may return to school.
- Should a suspected case of COVID-19 occur in school, all staff and children within the associated ‘bubble’ must be sent home and told to self-isolate for 14 days (or until a negative COVID-19 test is received).

- Children and staff are eligible for a COVID-19 test and a test should be arranged should any symptoms be shown and following advice from NHS 111.