



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Senior member of staff responsible:	Mr A J Smith, Head Teacher
Designated member of staff:	Miss S Pugh / Mr M Jervis Key Stage 3 / 4 Leaders
Governor Committee:	Pupil Discipline and Exclusion
Revised:	February 2018
Approved by Governing Body:	February 2018
Review date:	Summer 2019



ATTENDANCE POLICY

The school's Attendance Policy shapes the school ethos about how the school values and includes all people within it. Regular attendance is an essential foundation for creative and effective learning. It is our aim to encourage all students and parents to support the Attendance Policy so that all students may achieve their potential.

Governors' Statement

The governing body acknowledges and respects the core values and principles embodied in the policy and will work in partnership with the staff and outside agencies responsible for attendance.

The governors have a role to play in supporting any disciplinary procedures that may be deemed necessary by the headteacher or the Education Welfare Service.

Core Values and Principles

- Students should be at school on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- An inclusion education is where the success of all students is of equal value.
- A strong partnership between the school, parents, students and the community promotes good attendance.
- Absence from school, regular or irregular, has a detrimental effect on a student's academic progress.
- Absence from school can have a detrimental effect upon a child's moral, spiritual and social wellbeing.
- The school, community and related outside agencies are responsible for encouraging all students to attend school.
- Punctuality and self-discipline are important skills for life and we believe that students should take responsibility for attending school and arriving on time.
- We are committed to supporting 'vulnerable' students: special educational needs, looked after children (CLA), migrant and refugee students, travelling children, and those with physical or mental health needs, including bereaved students and students with parents living separately.
- We have a commitment to developing good communication systems and relationships with outside agencies to promote high levels of attendance, eg Education Welfare Officer.
- A commitment to praising students for good and improved attendance.

- A commitment to following clear strategies and procedures to:
 - monitor, analyse and improve attendance figures and reward improved attendance and 100% attendance;
 - to analyse the impact absence can have on teaching and learning and put strategies in place to support attendance, teaching and learning;
 - combat student absence;
 - improve attendance by supporting students and families in difficult circumstances.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Local Authority - Education Welfare Service

- The LA are responsible for ensuring that educational provision is available and for the implementation of non-school attendance procedures.
- Any legal action is the responsibility of the LA where the child goes to school.

Department of Education and Skills 2003

Education Welfare Officer:

- will regularly visit the school to discuss attendance and review registers with Key Stage Leaders / Head Teacher;
- will assess procedures and evaluate whole school attendance patterns;
- will draw up an annual action plan between the school and Education Welfare Service;
- will respond to referrals made by the school where school strategies to improve attendance have been unsuccessful;
- will work in partnership with students, parents, staff and other agencies to address absence;
- will support the school strategies of attendance sweeps, weekly clinics, student interviews and in the organisation of disciplinary panels, when appropriate;
- will follow the LA Referral Procedures.

School's Responsibilities

- To work in partnership with parents and carers to promote full attendance.
- To aim to inspire confidence in the school for students, parents, carers and staff.
- To investigate reasons for absence and support the student or parents, as appropriate.

- To monitor student attendance and inform parents if there are concerns at an early stage.
- To encourage self-discipline in its students to:
 - attend on time;
 - hand any note explaining an absence to the tutor.
- To support students with problems that impact on attendance and liaise with relevant outside agencies.
- To assist the Education Welfare Officer to carry out attendance sweeps.
- To assist the Education Welfare Officer in the organisation of 'clinics' with students whose attendance falls below 90%.
- To report annual attendance levels in the school's newsletter.
- To aim to keep attendance figures in line with, or above, the national average.
- To support the student returning from absence and ensure that they are sensitively reintegrated back into school.
- To keep records of individual attendance.
- To inform students of the importance of regular attendance in tutor time and in assemblies.
- To monitor lateness to lessons and inform the Key Stage Leader via email if patterns arise with individual students.
- To consult with the student's GP / Parents or the school's Health Service if the authenticity of illness is in doubt.
- To deal with requests for absence due to days of religious observance in a sensitive manner.
- To review, authorise, or unauthorise, time out of school during term time

Staff Responsibilities

The Headteacher

- To review and discuss admissions and attendance with the governing body and the Key Stage Leaders.
- To report the annual attendance figures to parents/carers and the governing body.
- To attend disciplinary hearings, as appropriate.

The Key Stage Leaders have overall responsibility to:

- monitor registers and attendance;
- meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Officer;
- promote and monitor a successful reintegration process;
- authorise leave of absence requests;
- develop the annual action plan with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer;
- inform headteacher on future targets and strategies agreed in the action plan;
- evaluate the effectiveness of agreed strategies to improve attendance, on an annual basis;
- analyse the annual figures and aim to improve teaching and learning;
- annually review the Attendance Policy;
- attending disciplinary hearings;
- monitoring the registers and attendance in their year groups;
- liaise with the Education Welfare Officer and the Attendance Officer;
- develop strategies to improve attendance/lateness figures;
- identify the needs for student planning meetings to determine future action and strategies to improve the attendance of identified students;
- inform staff about students' attendance/exclusion through weekly briefings;
- inform the Attendance Officer if a student is on a Fixed Term Exclusion;
- issue Punctuality Reports.

The Tutor is responsible for:

- taking the morning register on time and in silence;
- keeping an accurate register;
- signing all notes to indicate that they have been recorded and return via register to the Attendance Officer;
- reporting concerns about student welfare or attendance to the Key Stage Leaders;
- reporting to the Key Stage Leaders students who are frequently or regularly late to, or absent from, registration;
- ensuring that students follow the correct registration procedures;
- encouraging punctuality and self-discipline;
- discussing the importance of full attendance with the students;
- informing students about the role of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO);
- informing students of any changes in the timetable and consequent registration procedures, eg Curriculum Days.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

- A parent or carer is required, by law, to ensure that their child attends school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- A parent or carer is required to contact the school on the first day of absence.
- A parent or carer is required to explain all absences of their child(ren), preferably by email or telephone to the school's Attendance Officer on the day of absence, or by letter written and signed by the parent **on the day of return**.
- To accept that **the school** determines the classification of the absence and only the school can authorise an absence, not the parent.
- A parent should inform the school of any concerns which may affect full attendance and seek advice and support.
- Parents should provide a note from a doctor if a student has long term illness (ie attendance falls below 90% due to a medical condition).
- Parents should provide an appointment card for dental or hospital appointments and should ensure that a student returns to school as soon as he/she is able to do so. Where possible, appointments should be made outside the school day.
- Parents should attend relevant meetings where there is concern over the levels of attendance.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the Education Welfare Officer if there are problems with attendance.

- Parents are encouraged to reply to any letters from the Education Welfare Officer and discuss any relevant issues.
- The school prefers to give parents and carers every opportunity to improve unacceptable levels of attendance. If the strategies are not successful, parents or carers may be invited to attend a governors' disciplinary panel.
- Parents are required to pay any Fixed Penalty Notice charges issued by the Education Welfare Service or, in service cases, attend court proceedings.
- Parents are requested to give prior notice if a student wishes to be absent for days of religious observance.

Student Responsibilities

- In the interests of safety, all students are required to ensure that they attend registration and lessons on time and get their mark daily. It is vital that registers are accurate in case of fire or emergency.
- Students should make every effort to attend school, unless there is an unavoidable reason for absence.
- Students may request an interview with their Key Stage Leader and / or the Education Welfare Officer if there are problems getting to school.
- Students should bring a note explaining their absence **on the day of their return**. Parents / Carers are encouraged to email in reasons for absence
- Students should take responsibility for being in school on time for all registrations; punctuality is important.
- If a student is not able to attend registration due to illness he/she should report to the First Aider in the reception office and ask him/her to inform the Attendance Officer that he/she is in school but currently unwell. **Students who are unwell at registration time should not remain alone, or with a friend, in the toilets or outside the tutor room, without informing a member of staff.**
- In order to ensure that registers are accurate, students are required to remain silent when the register is called, unless answering their name.
- Students should answer the register call clearly and politely, using the name of the teacher responsible for the register, eg "Yes, Mrs ...".

Governor Responsibilities

- To support the Attendance Policy and attend Disciplinary Hearings to encourage improved attendance.
- To monitor the attendance data annually.
- To liaise with the Headteacher and Key Stage Leaders, as appropriate.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Registrations

All lessons must have an electronic register completed in the first 10 minutes. Missing students are to be marked 'N'. Please follow missing student procedure if student has been marked present in a previous lesson. See Appendix A.

The school operates a bell system to ensure registration times are adhered to.

Morning Registration Bells

8.45 am Registration begins First bell - all staff and students go to the tutor room (or assembly hall)

8.50 am registers are taken using Lesson Monitor and saved.

9.10 am Lessons begin

9.30 am Registers closed

Afternoon Registration Bells

1.15 pm Staff register students using Lesson Monitor and saved.

1.30 pm Registers closed

Morning Registration Procedures

- Students are expected to be in school by 8.40 am.
- Students and staff should be in their tutor room at 8.45 am.
- Students will be registered at 8.45 am daily, unless there are extraordinary circumstances, eg bus break down, school trip etc. The tutor will save the register. Students must sign in via Reception if late.
- Registers will be closed at 9.30 am.
- If a student is unable to attend registration because of acceptable circumstances, eg a music lesson/careers interview etc, he/she is required to register at the reception office before going into Lesson 1 or Assembly. He/she will be marked 'present'.
- If a student has not attended registration because he/she is late to school, he/she is required to report to the reception office. The student will be marked 'late' on the electronic register and a comment added as to how many minutes late.
- Any students who miss the morning or afternoon registration, for whatever reason, are required to see the receptionist as soon as possible to let her know that they are on site.

Afternoon Registration Procedures

- All students are expected to go to their afternoon lesson at 1.15 pm. The students will be registered by a member of staff.
- Procedures as for morning registration.

Lateness

Punctuality and self-discipline are important skills in life

- A student who arrives late, at any time in the school day should always report to school reception and sign in with the reason they are late;
- Students who are late will be logged via SIMS;
- The Key Stage Leaders will be informed and they will inform the Education Welfare Officer.

The Education Welfare Officer and Key Stage Leaders will agree a strategy to combat the lateness. This may involve the following:

- Attendance Officer contacts the home by telephone/letter;
- Education Welfare Officer interviews the student;
- Education Welfare Officer contacts the home;
- Education Welfare Officer visits the home;
- Key Stage Leader interviews the student;
- Student put on Punctuality Report, to be monitored by the tutor and Key Stage Leader weekly;
- Education Welfare Officer will monitor future attendance and contact the home immediately if a student who has been on Punctuality Report is late to school;
- Staff will record amount of time student is late to lesson;
- A student may be required to make up the lost time in lunchtime or after-school detention, if appropriate.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Definitions of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence:

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be out of school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. Absence can't be authorised retrospectively and must be requested in writing at least five days before.

Absence in Term Time

(LA guidelines and Government Regulations)

The school strongly discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. Parents/Carers are provided with a calendar of school events, progress evenings and examinations at the beginning of the academic year to support attendance.

Parents/Carers are required to ask permission for any absence in term time. In exceptional circumstances the school may authorise up to 5 days leave. Authorisation is dependent upon:

- The child's previous attendance history. Children with less than 90% attendance are deemed as of concern by the Education Welfare Service. Where a child's attendance is below the school average of 94.8%, leave of absence will not normally be authorised.
- The child's stage of education. Leave of absence will not normally be authorised in the following circumstances:
 - in September
 - for the first term of Year 7
 - for Year 11 students
 - during examination/controlled assignment periods
- The nature of the trip (it must be an exceptional experience).

Temporary School Closure

For school days where the whole school has to close due to severe weather conditions, the heating failure or other structural damage, no attendance registers are needed.

Approved Educational Activities Off Site

In circumstances where the absence of students to take part in supervised educational activities outside school but authorised by the school, it is recorded as 'present'.

Absence Follow-Up Procedures

- First day calling for vulnerable students actioned by Attendance Officer.
- If a student has been absent from school for two days without a contact from the parent, the Attendance Officer will contact the home to ascertain the reason for absence.

- If the absence is satisfactorily explained he/she will enter the correct code on the register.
- If he/she is unable to contact the home he/she will inform the Education Welfare Officer.
- If no reason is given or the reason is unsatisfactory, he/she will inform the Key Stage Leader and the Education Welfare Officer. The Education Welfare Officer will follow the Education Welfare Service guidelines and procedures.
- The Education Welfare Officer monitors attendance weekly for the majority of students, and daily for identified students (attendance falling below 87%) and provides Key Stage Leaders with up-to-date information at a weekly meeting, or more frequently, as appropriate.
- The Education Welfare Officer keeps the Key Stage Leaders up-to-date with attendance issues on a regular basis.

Rewards

- Students will be rewarded with commendations for good attendance (termly);
- Attendance figures will be published in the Webberzine and via assemblies.

Sanctions

- Students may be put on Punctuality Report by the tutor or Key Stage Leader;
- After-school detentions will be set in cases of truancy and students will be expected to apologise to the teachers concerned and make up the work missed;
- Parents will be invited into school to discuss a way forward with the Key Stage Leader and/or the Education Welfare Officer;
- Internal isolation for repeated truancy;
- Appearance before the governing body's disciplinary committee in serious cases of non-attendance.

Student Transfer

A record of a student's attendance will be forwarded to his/her new school within two weeks of the request for information.

Evaluation and Review

The analysis of the data on attendance and the effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed regularly by:

- The Headteacher
- A representative from the governing body
- The Education Welfare Service
- The KS3/KS4 Key Stage Leaders

REFERRAL PROCEDURES

Tutor identifies cause for concern

Attendance Officer identifies cause for concern

Key Stage Leaders informed

Key Stage Leader contacts the home
'Group Call' initiated

Absence/Lateness rectified

Absence/Lateness concern

Student monitored

No improvement

EWO informed and
consults with Key Stage Leaders

Reason for absence explained
No further action

Unsatisfactory reason for absence
EWO intervention agreed

EWO Intervention

Student interview by EWO
Contact with home by EWO
Home visit

IMPROVEMENT

Telephone call / Letter of praise
from school / EWO
Student monitored

NO IMPROVEMENT

2nd home visit
1st warning letter
Fixed penalty
Headteacher informed
2nd warning letter
Final warning letter
Attendance hearing
Court Action

ACTION TO BE TAKEN PRIOR TO CALLING HOME FOR ALL STUDENTS

If students appear absent from your lesson and are marked 'Present' previously, this action MUST be taken within 15 minutes of absence being noticed (eg: Period 1 = 9.20 am – 15 minutes after start of lesson)

- (1) Check with SP/MJ office and teaching rooms.
- (2) Check with PLC – Sally Harris.
- (3) Request JCh checks KS3 and KS4 toilets regardless of which key stage student is in.
- (4) 'On call' SLT/KSL check site.
- (5) Check answer machine for parents/carers explaining absences.
- (6) Check with reception to see if student has legitimately signed out / Connexions / external agencies / CHAT appointments / music lessons.
- (7) JCh to phone parents/carers. Speak with AJS (*if unavailable* JH/GD). If no contact with parents/carers is made – police are contacted



LEAVE OF ABSENCE (STUDENTS)

As of 1st September 2013 there has been a change in the School Attendance regulations.

What has changed?

Whilst the regulations are clear that responsibilities rest with headteachers in respect to authorisation, the Department for Education offered the following summary of the changes:

"The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to 10 school days leave per year. Headteachers can also grant extended leave for more than 10 school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted."

The amendment of the act says:

"Leave of absence shall not be granted unless:

- (a) an application has been made in advance to the proprietor (*headteacher*) by a parent with whom the student normally resides; *and*
- (b) the proprietor (*headteacher*), or a person authorised by the proprietor (*headteacher*) in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application."

At Mary Webb School and Science College the headteacher will only grant leave of absence when an application is made in advance and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance; the annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

In deciding whether to grant leave of absence for 'exceptional circumstances', the headteacher will follow the guidance and criteria listed below:

- It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life
- It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event
- The event cannot be organised outside of the school term
- The event is necessary to the health and wellbeing of the child
- Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school

Please note: Leave of absence requests should be submitted at least 5 days in advance.
Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively.

If you wish to discuss a leave of absence request prior to completing the request form, please contact Miss Pugh (Years 7, 8 and 9) or Mr Jervis (Years 10 and 11).

The school's decision, together with the reasons for the decision, will be communicated to parents/carers via the post.

The Education Access Team of Shropshire Council will continue to support Mary Webb School in this process. The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer of all requests for leave of absence and the headteacher's decision.

MARY WEBB SCHOOL & SCIENCE COLLEGE

APPLICATION FOR STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Return to: Miss S Pugh (KS3 Students) / Mr M Jervis (KS4 Students)

Please note each student requires a separate leave of absence application

Full name of

Student: _____ F

Form: _____

Address:

Reason for application and

dates: _____

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to school at least 5 days in advance. Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively.

In deciding whether to grant leave of absence for 'exceptional circumstances', the headteacher will follow the guidance and criteria listed below:

1. It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life
2. It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event
3. The event cannot be organised outside of the school term
4. The event is necessary to the health and wellbeing of the child
5. Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school

The Education Access Team of Shropshire Council will continue to support Mary Webb School in this process. The school will inform the Education Welfare Officer of all requests for leave of absence and the headteacher's decision.

Office use only (attach attendance certificate)

Current Attendance: _____%

Authorised [___ days]

School follow-up

Unauthorised [___ days]

EWO follow-up requested

Comments:

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Key Stage Leader

Letter sent by: _____ Date: _____