



Perton Middle School Attendance Policy

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence. We will ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence. We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

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:

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 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 is responsible for the 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 pupils and issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Chloe Shelley and she can be contacted via csh@sslp.uk. The senior leader is responsible for leading attendance across the school and offering a clear vision for attendance improvement. They will have an oversight of data analysis and will arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.

The school attendance officer will monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level, reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher, work with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence, arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues and advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

Attendance is the responsibility of everyone and pupils should feel safe to report any concerns or worries that may be affecting attendance to parents/carers or staff in school.

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of morning form time each day and once during the afternoon session with the form tutor. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils in Key Stage 2 must arrive in school by 8.35a.m and Key Stage 3 pupils must arrive in school by 8.40a.m. Gates will open at 8.25a.m. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35a.m and will be kept open until 9.00a.m. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.05p.m for Year 6 and 8 and will be kept open until 12.25p.m. The register for the second session for year 5 and 7 will open at 12.45p.m and close at 1.05p.m

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00a.m or as soon as practically possible. Parents or carers should phone (01902758244), text or email the school (office@perton-middle.staffs.sch.uk) on each day of absence unless the school has permitted more than one day of absence due to severe conditions such as broken bones, an operation etc. The school will advise parents and carers on when to contact school again with an update. We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This should be done via phone call, text or email. However, we encourage parents/carers 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. The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. After the register has closed a pupil will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. If a student arrives after 8.35, he/she must enter via reception. An 'L' code will be used after 8.45a.m and a 'U' code will be used after 9.00a.m. All medical reasons for lateness should be explained in a letter or an appointment card can be given as proof of attendance.

Lateness will be monitored by form tutors and sanctions will be applied where appropriate for persistent lateness. Communication about the punctuality issue will be communicated via letter or phone call home in

the first instance by the child's form tutor and then a sanction will be applied in school if the situation doesn't improve. SLT will periodically supervise 'late gates' to monitor punctuality.

If persistent lateness continues i.e. after the register has closed, the school may consider a penalty notice. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 10 weeks, excluding school holidays.

Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, sending a text on the first day of absence. If there is no response to the text, we will call on the second day of absence. All emergency numbers on the computer system will be contacted until a reason has been supplied. We will inform the EWO from VIP Education to conduct a safe and well visit if no contact has been made after the third day of absence.

If the situation does not improve, we may make further referrals to the Local Authority or invite parents to a meeting to resolve the situation if the school feel that attendance is becoming a concern.

We will ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary and identify whether the absence is approved or not before selecting the correct attendance code to use. Attendance will be reported to parents in each school report.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

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 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
- Bereavement of a close family member or a funeral. This would be a 'C' code on the register.

Reducing persistent absence

The school has a system in place for reducing persistent absence. In the first instance, we encourage parents/carers to contact school at the earliest opportunity if their child is facing difficulty in school or is having problems attending school. Phone calls home will be made by the Assistant Headteacher to ascertain if there are any underlying issues that school can help with. The Assistant Headteacher, Form Tutors, SENDCo, Assistant SENDCo, Heads of Year and Pastoral Support Officer are all sources of support and help for pupils to improve attendance. Contact will be made with home once attendance drops below 95%, 92% and 90%. At 90%, medical evidence may be required for further absences. If a request for medical evidence is made, a referral for a penalty notice to be issued once 20 absences are reached will be made to the local authority. Parents/carers will be invited to an Attendance clinic with the Assistant Headteacher and EWO from VIP Education where absence appears to be a problem. This will be offered before a penalty notice is issued.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or 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 can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. 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) or 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.

Strategies for promoting attendance

Form tutors will discuss attendance with pupils in their forms and we will hold assemblies on attendance with the EWO from VIP Education. We will give out certificates and rewards for anyone who achieves 100% attendance at the end of the year and will make clear the impact of poor attendance to parents/carers for pupils in school. We will make contact with parents/carers for pupils who are absent and create a welcoming and positive culture across school. We will liaise with outside agencies to promote and support good attendance and ensure that staff model good attendance and punctuality to lessons.

Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis. A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. Parents/carers should contact the school each day unless we have agreed a set number of days before contact needs to be made again (in the case of extended illness). If a pupil's attendance goes drops below 95% the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this. If a pupil's attendance continues to fall after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer. 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.

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 board.

As a school, we will collect and store attendance data so that it may be used for internal purposes. For example, to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention or support.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated by Chloe Shelley, Assistant Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

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 trip or visit	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 absent 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 observance
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