



**Stretford**  
Grammar School  
*Aspirat primo fortuna labori*

**Attendance Policy**

**Ratified by Governors:**

**Member of staff responsible: Assistant Head Student Welfare and Development**  
**Date: February 2022**

## **1. Aims**

- We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:
  - Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
  - Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
  - Acting 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, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

- 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.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 Parents:**

- ensure children attend regularly, and punctually
- contact school on the first day of absence
- contact each day for continued absence
- avoid any leave of absence in term time unless absolutely unavoidable
- request leave of absence on the authorised form, **giving a minimum of 28 days' notice**
- make early contact with school where parents become aware of problems with attendance
- attend meetings if concerns are identified
- support attendance contracts where appropriate
- support the school in agreed interventions/action plans

### **3.2 The Governing Body:**

- monitors attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis
- holds the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

- The Governor Welfare Committee is responsible for monitoring attendance figures

### **3.2 The Headteacher:**

- ensures the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- ensures the policy is followed in school
- authorises requests for absence in form time
- authorises fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.4 The Assistant Headteacher for Student Development and Wellbeing:**

- ensures the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- ensures the policy is followed in school
- monitors school-level absence data and reports it to governors
- takes the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- ensures that all patterns of lateness are identified and acted on robustly through parental contact and attendance contracts
- supports staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

### **3.5 Progress Leaders:**

- monitor the attendance in their Year group
- work with parents and the Attendance Officer to devise attendance contracts and other interventions
- attend meeting with parents to discuss attendance concerns
- monitor and adapt interventions for attendance

### **3.6 The Attendance Officer:**

- monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- monitors attendance messages and records absence information on registers
- sends out messages to parents/carers if a student is absent and a message has not been received to alert us to a reason for absence
- reports concerns about attendance to the assistant headteacher
- works with Trafford Attendance to tackle persistent absence
- arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- does home visits to support students and ensure they are safe
- ensures that sanctions for punctuality are issued
- advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.7 Class teachers/form tutors:**

- record attendance on SIMS a daily basis in form periods and in lessons, using the correct codes

### 3.8 Students:

- attend school **regularly** and **punctually**
- engage in interventions and practices to support good attendance
- adhere to appropriate systems for late registration
- adhere to attendance contracts where appropriate

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

- We keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register
- We take our attendance register at the start of form period in the morning and afternoon. 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 includes:
  - 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made
  - Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40 on each school day
  - The register for the first session is taken at 8.40 and will be kept open until 9.15. The afternoon register is taken at 2.55
  - A register is taken in the first 5 minutes of every lesson. The Attendance Officer or Office Staff, if the Attendance Officer is not available, are informed of any student who is not present but marked present at registration

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.35, if possible or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7)
- Parents/carers can call and leave a message or email [attendance@stretfordgrammar.com](mailto:attendance@stretfordgrammar.com). Parents should inform us of the name and form of the student and the reason for absence. A phone call or email should be sent on each day of absence

- We 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 do not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence is recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers are notified of this in advance

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

- Attending a medical or dental appointment is counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment
- 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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise
- There is an online form for requesting absence in term time and this can be found on the website in the Parent section under Forms and Letters

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

- A pupil who arrives late:
  - appropriate code of L
  - after the register has closed at 9.15, is marked as absent, using the appropriate code of U. When a student has been late ten or more times, he/she/they is given a fifteen minute detention for each subsequent late. This is served in the weekly pastoral detention led by each Year team. Parents are notified when this threshold is reached and notified each day if the student continues to arrive late. If lateness continues, parents are invited to a meeting with the Progress Leader and the Attendance Officer and a punctuality contract will be agreed outlining targets and support

#### **4.5 Following up absence**

- Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school:
  - we follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason by sending an SIMS Intouch message. If there is no response to this message, we follow up with a phone call and then a home visit, if contact has still not been made. We will advise parents if the school authorises the absence

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents**

- We report on absence three times a year on each data capture. When a student's attendance falls below 95% parents will be informed and support is offered. Further contact is made to review progress or to set new targets

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

- The Headteacher only grants a leave of absence to pupils during term time if he consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion
- We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a major family event such as the funeral of a close relative, serious or terminal illness of a close relative or significant family trauma has occurred and it is believed that a break is in the child's best interests
- We consider 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 (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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. We authorise two, non-consecutive days.
- 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

### **5.2 Reducing persistent absence**

- We introduce interventions as a means of supporting parents and students in achieving good attendance and accessing the full curriculum. Where there are attendance concerns, we seek to connect the student to positive supports and interventions. We help families to understand and avoid the legal consequences of chronic absence
- When a student's yearly attendance drops below 95%, we send an early warning letter to alert parents to the low attendance and invite them to a meeting to explore what help may be needed. We begin a period of closer monitoring and support
- If there is no improvement and attendance drops to 92%, we send a further letter to invite parents to a review meeting so that we can agree upon an attendance contract. We alert them to a 15 day penalty notice monitoring period whilst exploring further interventions. We ensure that there is continued positive and regular contact with parents
- Where there is no improvement, we will continue to offer support and guidance. We do not authorise any further absences without a medical note. We determine if the student or their family should be supported by additional agencies through Trafford Teams Together so that a comprehensive multi-agency plan can be devised. Positive and regular contact with parents is maintained.
- We alert parents that there is the possibility that we may be requesting a penalty notice if there are 2.5 days or more of unauthorised attendance during this period

- If there is still no improvement and there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in the monitoring period, we request a penalty notice. In the case of unauthorised holidays, we send the request on the day the student returns to school

### 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 takes 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
  - 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

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- **To promote good attendance, we:**
  - cultivate a welcoming atmosphere where students feel respected and safe and want to come to school
  - ensure an appropriate, responsive and engaging curriculum
  - provide a sympathetic response to students' concerns
  - share messages about the importance of good attendance and the impact on learning through assemblies, form time, information evenings and other communication with parents
  - teach about healthy lifestyles and ways to maintain good health
  - create visuals on noticeboards which reflect positive attendance messages
  - see students' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff
  - we reward good attendance by issuing values points to students who achieve good attendance or respond well to interventions to improve their attendance

## 7. Attendance monitoring

- The Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily 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 (see section 4.2)
- Attendance data is gathered on SIMS and used to inform a school attendance tracker
- The Attendance Officer analyses attendance data on a fortnightly basis and updates the attendance tracker
- We track the attendance of all students paying close attention to any emerging trends amongst specific groups. The data is used to identify any students in need of intervention and support and to monitor the impact of any intervention
- If a pupil's absence drops below 95%, we contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this and a tiered system of support and monitoring is started. This begins at Tier 2a

- 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. This triggers intervention at Tier 2b
- 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. We compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Governing Body at Welfare Committee meetings

**8. The Sixth Form** Attendance Policy outlines more detailed information relating to students in the Sixth Form and interventions to support attendance concerns

### 9. Monitoring arrangements

- This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 3 years by the Assistant Headteacher for student welfare and support. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board

### 9. 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

<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

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<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

Appendix 2 Tiers of Support and Intervention for the Sixth Form

	Tier 1	Tier 2a	Tier 2b	Tier 3	Tier 4
	Universal provision	95% attendance or below.	92% or below with no evidence of improvement.	90% attendance and below with no evidence of improvement	Chronic persistent absence with no improvement shown. 10 days unauthorised absence during the monitoring period
Communication	Yearly attendance updates are shared three times a year Intouch messages to congratulate on achieving 100% attendance.	Cause for concern letter	Pre warning letter.	Penalty warning letter	Daily contact One home visit or online meeting per fortnight
Support	Key messages about the importance of good attendance and the impact on learning through assemblies, form time, information evenings and other communication with parents  Lessons on healthy lifestyles and ways to maintain good health Key messages displayed on visuals on noticeboards which reflect positive attendance messages	Offer to parents of a support meeting with the Attendance Office	Support meeting with the Progress Leader and the Attendance Office  Attendance Contract. 15 day monitoring period.	Meeting with the Attendance Officer and the Director of Sixth Form  Offer of a referral to Trafford Teams Together to access multi-agency support planning. Attendance Contract 2	Meeting with the Director of Sixth Form and the SLT lead for Sixth Form.  Multi-agency support planning. Attendance Support Plan.
Follow up		Form Tutor discussion with the student. Note logged on SIMS.	No absence without a medical note.	Meeting with parents to discuss a student's place in the 6 <sup>th</sup> Form	Possible loss of place in the Sixth Form

Appendix 2. Tiers of Support and Intervention for Years 7-11

	Tier 1	Tier 2a	Tier 2b	Tier 3	Tier 4
	Universal provision	95% attendance or below.	92% or below with no evidence of improvement.	90% attendance and below with no evidence of improvement	Chronic persistent absence with no improvement shown. 10 days unauthorised absence during the monitoring period
Communication	Yearly attendance updates are shared three times a year Intouch messages to congratulate on achieving 100% attendance.	Cause for concern letter	Pre warning letter.	Penalty warning letter	Daily contact One home visit or online meeting per fortnight
Support	Key messages about the importance of good attendance and the impact on learning through assemblies, form time, information evenings and other communication with parents  Lessons on healthy lifestyles and ways to maintain good health Key messages displayed on visuals on noticeboards which reflect positive attendance messages	Offer to parents of a support meeting with the Attendance Office	Support meeting with the Progress Leader and the Attendance Office  Attendance Contract. 15 day monitoring period.	Meeting with the Attendance Officer and the Progress Leader  Offer of a referral to Trafford Teams Together to access multi-agency support planning. Attendance Contract 2	Meeting with the Assistant Headteacher for Student Development and Support, the Progress Leader and the Attendance Officer.  Multi-agency support planning. Attendance Support Plan.
Follow up		Form Tutor discussion with the student. Note logged on SIMS.	4 week penalty notice period.  No absence without a medical note.	Penalty notice request if no improvement.	Possible Parenting Order.  Possible prosecution.