

Attendance Policy

(see: [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) 08 24) *'...where we all matter.'*

Effective: Autumn 2024

Review: Summer 2024
or if changes needed earlier

Person responsible for policy	FGB
Approval Date	July 2024
Chair of Governors	Terry Whalley

1 Introduction

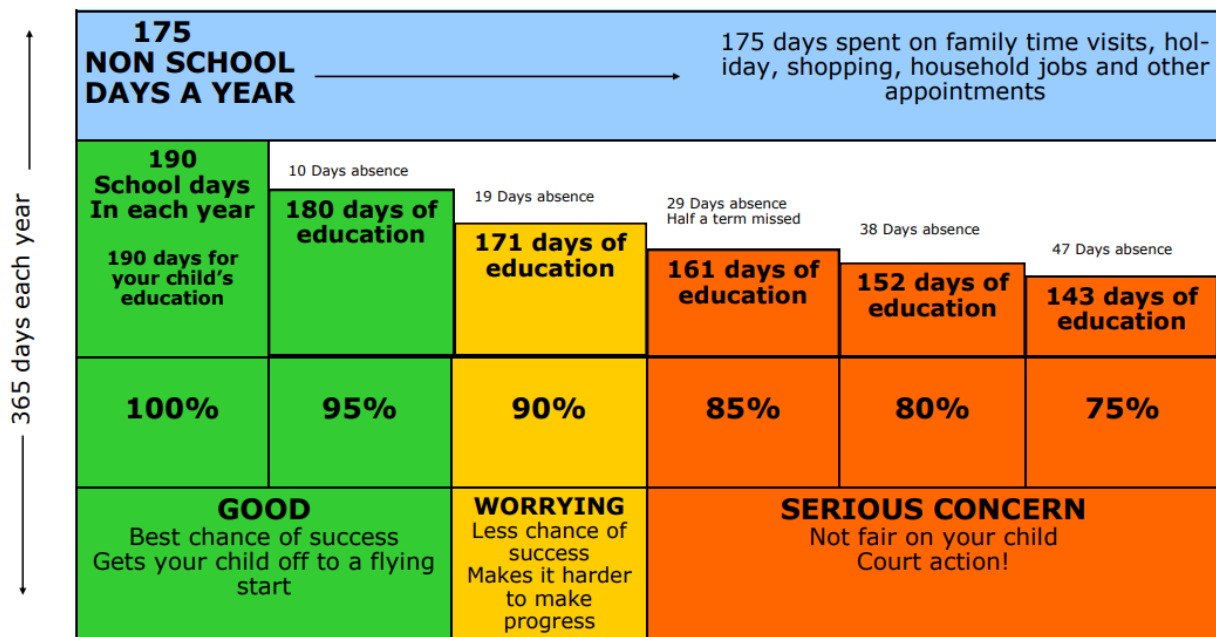
- 1 *'The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.'* [*Working Together to Improve School Attendance 02 24; applies 08 24*]
- 1.1 Our school's senior attendance champion is Mrs Rebecca Charlesworth. She can be contacted via email on head@wrenbury.cheshire.sch.uk. Mrs Victoria Robinson supports Mrs Charlesworth on the day-to-day monitoring of attendance. Both can be contacted on 01270 260656.
- 1.2 At Wrenbury Primary School, we aspire to 'nurture happy, healthy and hopeful children prepared for tomorrow.' We know that this can only be achieved through very good attendance. Attending school gives children the greatest opportunity to be successful academically and have positive mental wellbeing.

Code	Attendance	Impact
Green	100%	No lessons missed
	99%	Missing around 10 lessons
	98%	Missing around 20 lessons
	97%	Missing around 30 lessons
Amber	96%	Missing about 8 days of school, up to 40 lessons
	95%	Missing about 2 weeks of school, up to 48 lessons
	93%	Missing 14 days of school, up to 66 lessons A significant amount of education lost.
Red 1	90-92%	Missing more than 3 weeks of education, up to 95 lessons A significant amount of education to lose.
Red 2	86-89%	Missing between 4-6 weeks, Up to 133 lessons missed A serious loss of learning which is likely to have a detrimental effect on achievement.
Red 3	81-85%	Missing between 6- 8 weeks, up to 180 lessons missed A serious loss of learning.
Red 4	80% and below	Missing more than 8 weeks, more than 200 lessons missed A serious loss of learning.

- 1.3 There are 365 days in a year of which 190 days are spent in school. Wrenbury Primary School expects all children registered at the school to attend every day if they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage our children to attend and expect parents to be supportive of our aspirations for their child's attendance, wellbeing, and academic success. We believe that the most important factor in promoting very good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school by the parent and the child and through good parent partnership with school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children and

families. We will reward very good attendance whilst also making the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Days off school add up to lost learning:



1.4 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day and whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised. All attendance must be regularly monitored, and schools must answer for their data to the local authority and Ofsted.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when *a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian.*

There are only a small number of circumstances where missing a school day is permitted. Your child must attend every day that the school is open, unless:

- Your child is too ill to attend.
- You have asked in advance and been given permission by the school for your child to be absent on a specific day due to exceptional circumstances.
- Your child cannot go to school on a specific day because they are observing a religious event.
- Your local authority is responsible for arranging your child's transport to school and it's not available or has not been provided yet.
- Your child does not have a permanent address and you are required to travel for work. This exception only applies if your child attends their usual school or another school where you are staying as often as possible. This must be 200 half days or more a year if they are aged 6 or older.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours or keeps a child at home for a birthday.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when *a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.*

Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

2.3 A Session

A session is *a morning or afternoon of education.* 2 sessions equate to 1 day of education; 10 sessions equate to 5 days of education.

3 If a Child is absent.

3.1 Parents have a legal responsibility to inform the school regarding a child's absence and the reason for the absence every day of a child's absence. Parents are asked to telephone the school office (01270 260656) if their child is going to be absent in the first instance. The office is open from 8:00 am daily. A voice message can be left; a text message or an email sent. It is expected that the parent/carer notifies the school no later than 9am. Should there be no information received by school for a child's absence by 9:30am, when registers close, the school will telephone the family to investigate the absence. (This supports the school's safeguarding policy.)

3.2 All absence needs to be coded in the register. This code will be determined on information received from parents or those with parental responsibility for a child. This information may be received in person, by telephone, text message or email.

3.3 Registration Coding

Register Codes	Reason for Code
L	Late arrival - <i>arrival after 9am and before 9.30am</i>
U	Arrival after 9.30am - counts towards unauthorised absences
O	Absent for unknown circumstances - unauthorised absence
I	Illness - Identified illness (not just 'under the weather')
M	Medical appointment
C	Part-time timetable – agreed with LA
G	Holiday not granted by school – unauthorised absence

3.4 School Times and Punctuality

Classroom Doors open: 8:40am

Registration: 8:55am

Pupils should arrive at school **no later than 8:55am** each morning. It is important that children come to school **on time every day** so that they don't miss out on learning.

Being punctual is important and every minute counts:

- 10 minutes late each day is 6.5 days lost learning (over a week of learning)
- 15 minutes late each day is 10 days lost learning (2 weeks of learning).
- 20 minutes late each day is 13 days lost learning (2 ½ weeks of learning)
- 30 minutes late each day is 19 days lost learning (nearly 4 weeks of learning)

The registration coding for being late is **L**. **L is coded from the point the child has to enter through the main reception door (not class entry door) until 9.30am.**

- 3.5 A written note, email, text or phone call may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment. It is good practice to share the appointment evidence with the school office.
- 3.6 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, who has not arrived in class and a message regarding absence has not been received, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school administrator will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian to check on the safety of the child.
- 3.7 If a child's level of absence causes concern (attendance dropping below 95%) parents will be informed **in writing**, encouraged to improve their child's attendance, asked if they require any support and reminded of the requirements of the law and the impact non-attendance has upon their child's education.
- 3.8 The school's attendance data is shared daily with the LA and the DfE. The LA use the information as part of the termly monitoring of school's attendance data and for children whose attendance is on the cusp of 90% or have fallen below 90% attendance into persistent absence. This data is used to allow better and more targeted support to be put in place as early as possible to support improved attendance.
- 3.9 The DfE has developed a document, which outlines the responsibilities of parents, schools, governing bodies and LAs in supporting improvement of attendance for individual pupils: [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance August 2024](#).

3.10 Working Together to Improve Attendance

School aims to treat the root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance, by working collaboratively and in partnership with, not against, families.

As partners, our objective is to work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen & Understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate Support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise Support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

4 Requests for Leave of Absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there may be some exceptional circumstances when a child may have to be absent from school.
- 4.2 Parents do not now have the right to withdraw their children from School for an annual holiday. We naturally prefer parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods and strongly encourage this. The Head-teacher is unable to authorise any holiday absence. Leave of absence can only be authorised for exceptional circumstances. These are few and limited. Each application will be looked at individually and will be considered within the strict legislative directive from the DFE.
- 4.3 If the school does not authorise the holiday/leave of absence and it is for 10 or more consecutive sessions (5 days or more), the school will contact the Local Authority and a fixed Penalty Notice will be issued regarding the unauthorised absence.

5 Absence through Illness

- 5.1 If your child is ill for more than 3 consecutive days (including over a weekend) school should seek medical evidence in the form of: GP appointment card/ text message confirmation of GP appointment, medical prescription or other, in communication with parents. If the school has a cause for concern, and no evidence is provided, a home visit may be conducted – in line with our safeguarding policy.
- 5.2 School is mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.

6 Long-Term Absence

- 6.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send learning material home, so that the child can keep up with their schoolwork, if the child is well enough to complete the work.
- 6.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the Medical Needs Team, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school, should the child's illness meet their criteria.
- 6.3 If a pupil is away from school for 15 school days or more, whether consecutively or cumulatively across the academic year, because of illness, school has a mandatory obligation to inform the Attendance and Children Out of School Service [ACOOSS]. Parents will be informed of this by school. Parents will be requested to provide supporting documentation (eg: doctor's/ consultation letter) for any further illness over the 15 days. School may ask a consultant / doctor to provide a letter to confirm that a high level of absence is consistent with the level of illness/ medical intervention of a pupil. This medical evidence will support school to better understand the needs of the pupil.

7 Repeated Unauthorised Absences

- 7.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Attendance and Children Out of School Service.

7.2 The Governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis. (See section 7)

8. Penalty Notices and Further Action

8.1 A new National Framework for Penalty Notices will come into force from 19 August 2024; the outline of which can be found [here](#). A Penalty Notice warning letter will be issued if a child is absent for 10 or more unauthorised sessions equivalent to 5 school days (a session is a half day), within a rolling 10 school week period.

NOTE: the threshold of 10 sessions can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence such as holiday, arriving late after register closes (after 9.30) and any other unauthorised absence. Furthermore, the 10-week rolling period may span different terms or school years eg summer into autumn.

Prior to this, school will send a letter to warn and inform parents that their child’s attendance is reaching the 10-session unauthorised absence threshold. The warning letter gives the parent/carer a monitoring period of 15 school days. If, at the end of this period, there has not been an improvement or an improvement has been made but not sustained, a Penalty Notice may be issued.

8.2 Fixed penalty Notice Costs and Time Frame

Cheshire East Council’s Fixed Penalty Notices. Current Costings and Time Frames		
1 child	1 child	1 child (or more)
£80 if fine paid within 21 days	£160 if fine not paid within 28 days	Court if fine not paid with 28 days
Paid by each parent/carer with parental responsibility	Paid by each parent/carer with parental responsibility	

8.3 In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period.

Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

9 Rewards for Good Attendance

9.1 Each Base’s attendance is reported each week in the Monday afternoon Y6 led assembly. The base with the highest attendance is awarded a certificate and the need for outstanding attendance is messaged.

9.2 The Head teacher reports on the attendance for each Base in the HT newsletter sent home which also celebrates outstanding attendance. This is also shared on the school website.

9.3 An end of term afternoon reward for all those with 97 % or above attendance.

9.4 All the children who have 100 per cent attendance will receive an excellence certificate for attendance, awarded at the last assembly of the year.

10 Monitoring and Review

10.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should and could be.

- 10.2 Class teachers, in liaison with the office administrator will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way.
If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. In the first instance the admin officer who oversees daily attendance will contact the parent/carer.
If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 10.3 Where the absence of a child may be linked to other concerns eg safeguarding, the absence of the child will be reported to the Head teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead directly.
- 10.4 The School will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.