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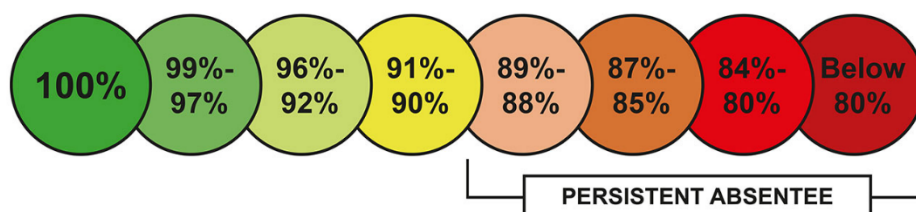
# A Guide to Attendance at Madeley School.

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## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

On Time: First Time, Every Time



### Which CIRCLE are you in?

2024-25

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Parents and Carers

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# Attendance

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**At Madeley School, we want all students to strive for 100% attendance to give them the best opportunity for future success.**

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## Introduction

Being around teachers and friends in a school or college environment is the best way for pupils to learn and reach their potential. Time in school also keeps children safe and provides access to extra-curricular opportunities and pastoral care.

That's why school attendance is so important and why the Government is committed to tackling the issues that might cause some children to miss school unnecessarily.

We have put together this guide for parents and carers on the importance of attendance, the law surrounding a child's attendance to school and what measures could be put in place if a child's attendance is a concern.

## How does attendance affect outcomes for pupils?

Being in school is important to a child's achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. Evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results.

Government research has found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well.

Whilst 90% might sound like a good figure when used as a statistic, 90% attendance is a concerning level of attendance (one day off per fortnight for the whole school year). Research shows that every missed day from school is associated with a lower chance of children achieving their target grades in their GCSE exams.

The Government states that 95% or above is good attendance – anything above this is what each pupil should be aiming for.

**Madeley school sets an attendance target of 96%.**

# Attendance

## Guidelines and Statistics

### Attendance Ladder



The traffic light monitoring system can be used to track, monitor and plan actions to improve a pupil's attendance.

Number of days absent	Equals attendance over one school year
9.5 days	95%
19 days	90%
28.5 days	85%
38 days	80%
47.5 days	75%
57 days	70%
66.5 days	65%

Number of days absent	Equals attendance over half a term
2 days	95%
3.5 days	90%
5.5 days	85%
7.5 days	80%
9 days	75%
11 days	70%
13 days	65%

The table above puts absence in the context of the day's children miss at school based on a school being opened for 190 days per year and this table puts absence into context of the day's children miss at school over a half term period.

## The Law

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.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

*DfE: Working together to improve school attendance 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024*

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).	Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.	Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.
	Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.
	Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.

*DfE: Responsibilities for school attendance 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024*

## Expectations of schools

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and should therefore be seen as everyone's responsibility in school.

The most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents, systematically analyse their data to identify patterns to target their improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance. They also recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils want to attend and can learn and thrive.

To manage and improve attendance effectively, all schools are expected to:

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- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
  - Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
  - Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence.
  - Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
  - Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
  - Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
  - Be particularly 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.

*DfE: Working together to improve school attendance 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024*

## Authorised absences

Are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable cause. This can usually be applied to the following:

- Genuine illness.
- Unavoidable appointments which must be attended during school hours (usually applicable to hospital visits).
- Compassionate circumstances (e.g. bereavement).
- The absence occurs on a day set aside for religious observance by the religion to which the student's parents belong. This absence is authorised for one day only.
- The student has a medical appointment, or an interview approved by the school.
- The student is taking part in approved work experience or alternative provision.
- The student is excluded

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

***Please refer to the school's Attendance Policy if unsure.***

# Pupils who are persistently absent

## What does persistently absent mean?

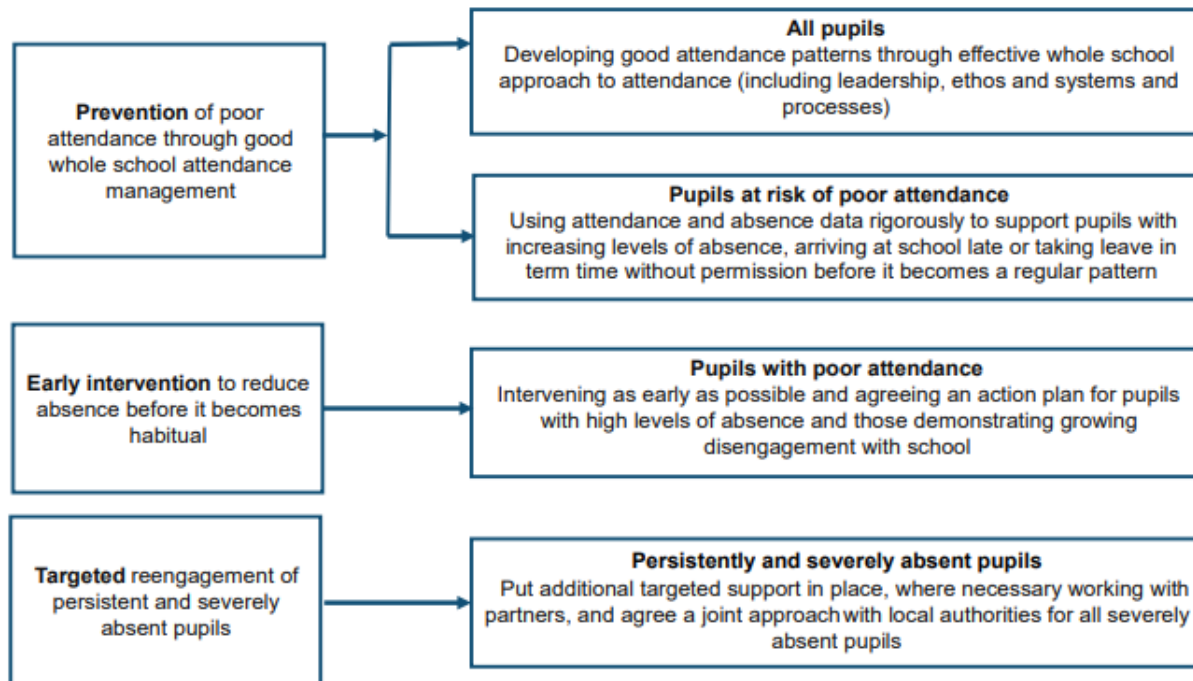
Where absence escalates and pupils miss **10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year)**, schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils.

**90% attendance or below.**

*DfE: Responsibilities for school attendance 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024*

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>

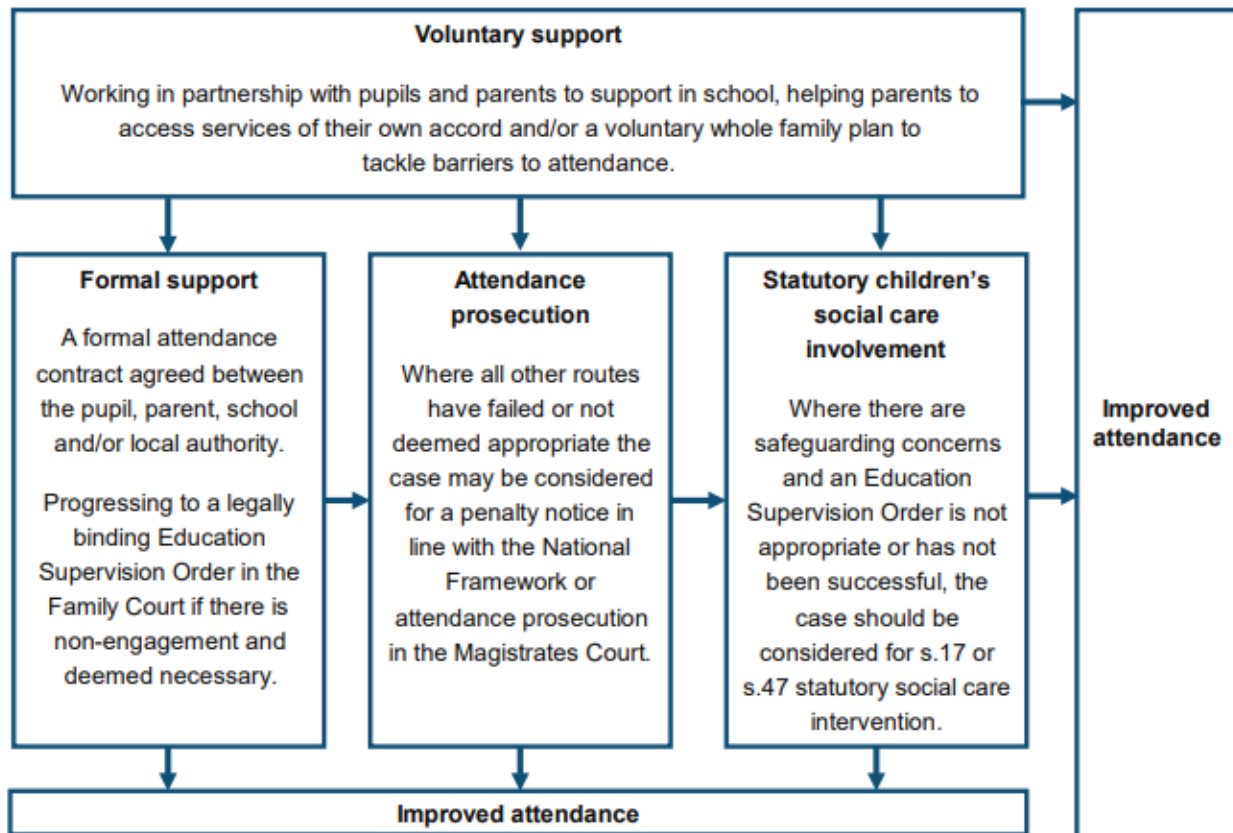
## Effective school attendance improvement and management



# Attendance and legal intervention

As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, trusts and local authorities should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents.

## Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



## Attendance Contracts

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision.

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## **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

Where a formal attendance contract has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be a useful alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time

## **Attendance prosecution**

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

## **Parenting orders**

Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.

## **Penalty Notices**

Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be used by all schools where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes and that absence(s) constitutes an offence.



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Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and will only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).

The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

**Please note a session is a morning or afternoon, so 1 day counts as 2 sessions.**

## Receiving a penalty notice

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in

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a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion.

## **Procedures for dealing with attendance at Madeley School**

### ***In line with the attendance ladder***

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that our school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work in partnership with pupils and parents collaboratively to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium.

We believe regular communication with parents and carers is crucial in raising the profile of our school attendance and punctuality. We do this in a variety of ways:

- Newsletters
- Notice boards around school
- Letters we send home to parents and carers
- Text messages
- Emails
- School website (please see our attendance page)
- Arbor
- Telephone calls
- Face to face discussions and meetings
- Action planning and support packages

As a guide, we use the following thresholds to determine what support we need to put in place for our students to improve their attendance:

Thresholds	Actions that MUST be taken	Actions that COULD be taken
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-being conversation with student and form tutor on return to school.</li> <li>Well-being phone call home to parent or carer from form tutor whilst absent or thereafter.</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage 1 letter to be sent home.</li> <li>HOY meeting with student.</li> <li>HOY phone call home to parent or carer whilst absent or thereafter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HOY face to face meeting with parents or carers.</li> <li>Internal target setting/discussion on potential barriers to school.</li> <li>Signposting to relevant support networks</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage 2 letter to be sent home.</li> <li>Attendance officer meeting with student.</li> <li>Attendance office meeting with parents or carers.</li> <li>Attendance action plan to be completed.</li> <li>Weekly mentor meeting with a member of the pastoral team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child-centred support plan put in place.</li> <li>Barriers to attendance questionnaire.</li> <li>School Health referral if appropriate.</li> <li>Meeting with Careers advisor.</li> <li>Parent/carers contract.</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage 3 letter sent.</li> <li>Medical evidence required.</li> <li>Parent/carers contract.</li> <li>Support plan put in place and reviewed regularly.</li> <li>EHA to start.</li> <li>Further meeting with EWO/attendance support officer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referrals to external agencies as needed based on barriers to attendance questionnaire.</li> <li>Weekly support meetings with attendance officer.</li> <li>EHCP review if appropriate.</li> </ul>
Thereafter:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stage 4 letter sent.</li> <li>Pre-legal target/FPN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting classes.</li> <li>LA schooling provision for pupils missing 15 days or more for medical reasons.</li> </ul>




Further support might be in the form of a bespoke timetable, Early Help intervention, key support services to meet the needs of the student and family, one-to-one mentoring for example.

The table puts absence in the context of the day's children miss at school based on various stages over the course of a school year (school being open for 190 days – discounting INSET days).

<b>Autumn Term</b> (73 days for term)	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days	8 days	9 days	10 days	11 days	12 days	13 days	14 days	15 days					
1st Half (37)	97.2	94.5	91.8	89.1	86.4	83.7	81	78.3	75.6	72.9	70.2	67.5	64.8	62.1	59.4					
2nd Half (73)	98.6	97.2	95.8	94.5	93.1	91.7	90.4	89	87.6	86.3	84.9	83.5	82.1	80.8	79.4					
<b>Spring Term</b> (123 days for two terms)	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days	8 days	9 days	10 days	11 days	12 days	13 days	14 days	15 days					
1st Half (98)	98.9	97.9	96.9	95.9	94.8	93.8	92.8	91.8	90.8	89.7	88.7	87.7	86.7	85.7	84.6					
2nd Half (123)	99.1	98.3	97.5	96.7	95.9	95.1	94.3	93.4	92.6	91.8	91	90.2	89.4	88.6	87.8					
<b>Summer Term</b> (186 days for year)	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days	8 days	9 days	10 days	11 days	12 days	13 days	14 days	15 days					
1st Half (156)	99.3	98.7	98	97.4	96.7	96.1	95.5	94.8	94.2	93.5	92.9	92.3	91.6	91	90					
2nd Half (186)	99.4	98.9	98.3	97.8	97.3	96.7	96.2	95.6	95.1	94.6	94	93.5	93	92.4	91.9					
																16 days	17 days	18 days	19 days	20 days
																83.6	82.6	81.6	80.6	79.5
																86.9	86.1	85.3	84.5	83.7
																16 days	17 days	18 days	19 days	20 days
																89.7	89.1	88.4	87.2	87.1
																91.3	90.8	90.3	89.7	89.2

Stage 1
Stage 2
Stage 3
Stage 4

## Working together to improve attendance

		
<b>Parents and Carers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Madeley School</b>
<p>Ensuring your child understands the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality.</p> <p>Taking an interest in their education – asking about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities.</p> <p>Discussing any problems they may have at school and inform their Head of Year to pass on concerns quickly.</p> <p>Not allowing them take time off school for minor ailments – particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work.</p> <p>Arranging appointments after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays will help to prevent disruption to your child’s education and to the school.</p> <p>Being open and willing to work with us to improve your child’s attendance.</p>	<p>Speaking to a trusted adult about the reasons why you might not want to come to school.</p> <p>Trying hard every morning to get up and get to school, unless you are really unwell.</p> <p>Getting an early night, feeling tired on a morning can make getting to school harder.</p> <p>Make sure you get to school on time every day.</p>	<p>Ensuring a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance amongst our students, staff and parents and carers.</p> <p>Ensuring that Madeley School is a safe and enjoyable environment for students and staff to attend.</p> <p>Have a clear attendance policy.</p> <p>Regularly monitor and analyse attendance to identify students who require support with their attendance and put strategies in place.</p> <p>Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.</p> <p>Share information and work collaboratively with local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.</p>

We understand at times appointments are unavoidable, but attending school before and after, will give a student their attendance mark.

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## Our Attendance Team

Although attendance is everyone's responsibility, we have a designated team who support and manage attendance at Madeley.

### Attendance Officer

Mrs H Bagnall: [hazel.bagnall@madeley.set.org](mailto:hazel.bagnall@madeley.set.org)

### Attendance champion

Mrs S Halstead: [sara.halstead@madeley.set.org](mailto:sara.halstead@madeley.set.org)

### Heads of Year:

- Head of Year 7: [hayley.drohan@madeley.set.org](mailto:hayley.drohan@madeley.set.org)
- Head of Year 8: [phil.dale@madeley.set.org](mailto:phil.dale@madeley.set.org)
- Head of Year 9: [steve.walker@madeley.set.org](mailto:steve.walker@madeley.set.org)
- Head of Year 10: [elliott.flemming@madeley.set.org](mailto:elliott.flemming@madeley.set.org)
- Head of Year 11: [sara.halstead@madeley.set.org](mailto:sara.halstead@madeley.set.org)
- Pastoral support: [jeanette.carter@madeley.set.org](mailto:jeanette.carter@madeley.set.org)

### SENDCO

Ms Emma Boustead: [emma.boustead@madeley.set.org](mailto:emma.boustead@madeley.set.org)

If you need any support with your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact one of the team.

